Senate to investigate $2-million man in Impsa deal

Story below, Col. 1

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- **Lacson report deferred**
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Leyteños want Imelda back in Congress

By Juliet Javellana

BUTI PA KAYO ALAM N'YO

THERE'S a clamor from her provincemates for former first lady Imelda Marcos to run for her old seat in Congress representing the first dis-

LEYTEÑOS/ A18

GMA assures Meralco of total support

President met with Lopez family

By Dona Pazzibugan and Cynthia D. Balana

ON THE DAY the Supreme Court ruled against the Manila Electric Co., the President issued her marching orders: Save Meralco.

President Macapagal-Arroyo met with top officials of Meralco and members of the Lopez family that controls it in a hastily arranged meeting on Friday night, presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao disclosed under questioning yesterday. The meeting resulted in the President's decision to form a "high-level working group" to help the power firm, with Energy Secretary Vincent Perez as chair.

Yesterday, Perez told reporters that "the financial health of Meralco is a significant concern to the Republic of the Philippines, so we will ensure by all means (its) financial viability."

Tiglao said it was ABS-CBN president Eugenio "Gabby" Lopez III who asked for a meeting with the President, through his classmate, Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho.

Despite the short notice, Ms Macapagal canceled her appointments to dine with the Lopezes in Malacañang that night.

Those present were Oscar Lopez, head of the Lopez group of companies, Meralco chair and CEO Manuel Lopez, director Frederico "Piki" Lopez, Steve Psinakis, Gabby Lopez and ABS-CBN president Freddie Garcia. They were joined by Camacho, Perez, Tiglao and chief presidential legal counsel Avelino Cruz Jr. Senate President Franklin Drilon also

PRESIDENT/ A18

Refund is P29.2B, say activist scientists

By Agnes E. Donato

THE BILL is not P8 billion, as Manila Electric Co. president Jesus Francisco suggested on Monday. It is not P28.15 billion, as Meralco itself tried to impress on the Supreme Court in its belated Nov. 7 motion. Instead, the power firm's total excess charges amount to P29.2 billion.

A group of activist scientists claimed yesterday that "simple arithmetic" would show exactly how much Meralco owed its almost 4 million customers.

Giovanni Tapang, national chair of the Samahan ng Nagtataguyod ng Agham at Teknolohiya para sa Sambayanan (Agham), said the total would be P29.2 billion if the whole of 2002 were included in the computation.

"Meralco is just confusing us," Tapang said. "It is only necessary to multiply that amount by the total kilowatt-hours sold from February 1994 to December 2002. It's simple arithmetic."

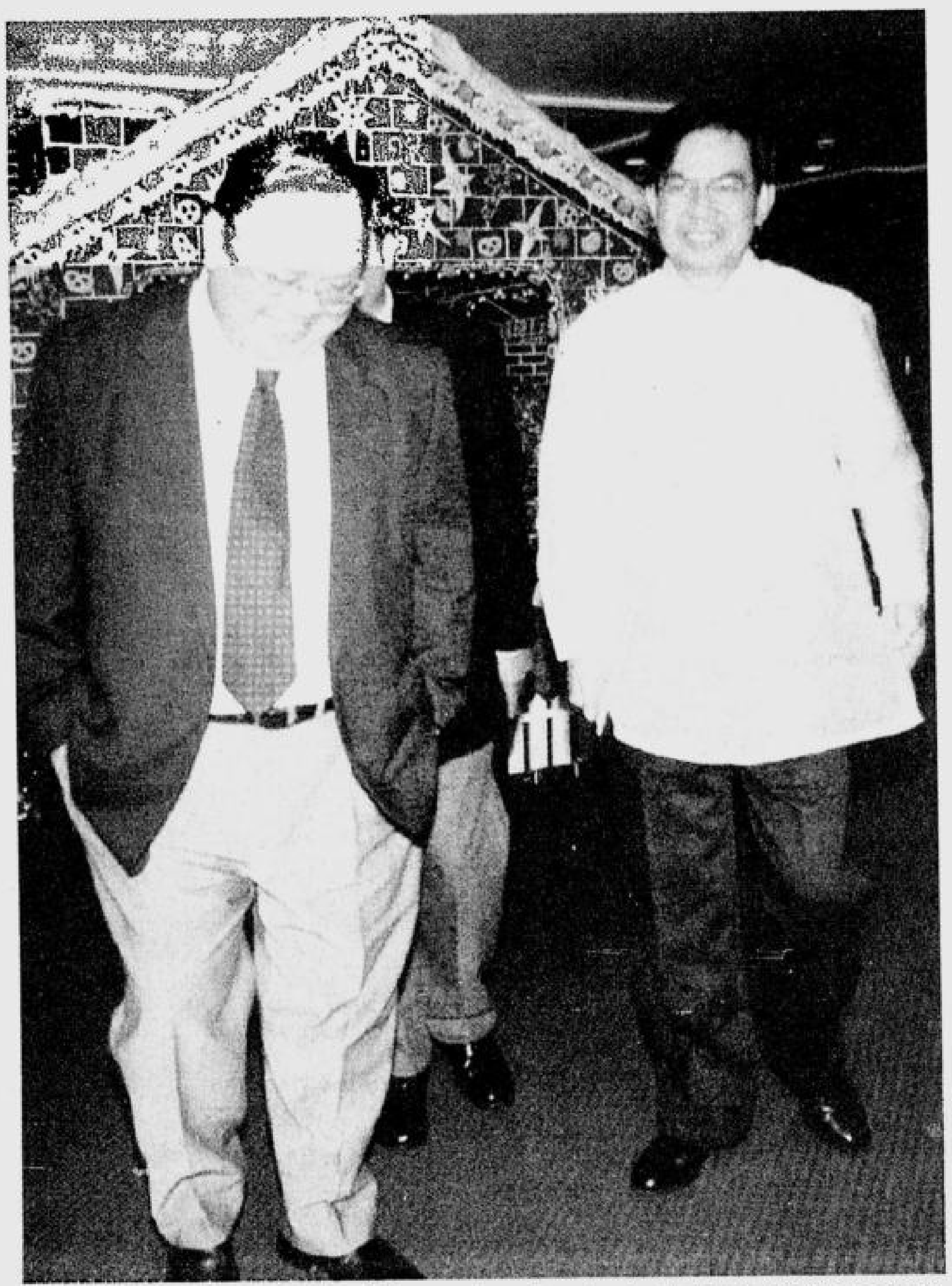
Tapang, who has a doctorate in physics, said official Meralco documents would show how much electricity the power distributor had sold in the period in question.

Assuming that 2002 sales are about the same as that for 2001, Tapang said Meralco would have sold a total of 175 million kWh.

Multiplied by 16.7 centavos, the total amount for refund would then be P29.2 billion.

Tapang said that for a typical

REFUND/ A18



COMING-OUT party for Sen. Panfilo Lacson shown here leaving the Foreign Correspondents Association forum with Rep. Ronaldo Zamora. JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

'WE'LL BEAT GMA'

Lacson declares Palace bid, defies Church on population

SEN. Panfilo Lacson yesterday became the first politician to categorically declare his intention to run for president in 2004, lashing out at his most likely rival, President Macapagal-Arroyo, for bringing the country "to ruin."

At a Foreign Correspondents Association (Focap) forum yesterday, Lacson also became the first major politician to challenge the Catholic Church when he urged wider use of artificial contraceptives to curb the country's runaway population growth.

The opposition parties, he told Focap, agreed to unite and put up a common candidate. He said that the opposition was scheduled to meet next month to begin the process of selecting their standard-bearer.

Aside from himself, Lacson named Sen. Edgardo Angara and movie idol Fernando Poe Jr. as the other likely contenders.

Angara heads the main opposition party, LDP, which is also Lacson's party. Poe, who has repeatedly said that he's not in the running, reportedly continues to be wooed by close associates of former President Joseph Estrada. Estrada and Poe are the best of friends.

The opposition coalition includes Miriam

LACSON/ A19

Stock market down; SC ruling worries investors

By Gil Cabacungan Jr.

THE STOCK market sagged further yesterday, as investors pondered prospects for beleaguered Manila Electric Co. But the official in charge of the government's investment promotion agency said he was worried about a bigger problem: the impact of the Supreme Court ruling ordering Meralco to pay a rate refund on prospective investors—especially those in big-ticket utility projects.

Board of Investments managing head Gregory Domingo said the SC decision has raised serious questions about the viability of the country's utility projects, and the process by which utility rates are set.

"The biggest question is, Will

STOCK MARKET/ A18

$2-M man not yet off the hook; Senate sets quiz

By Rocky Nazareno

JAILED ex-President Joseph Estrada and two House members may be invited to appear in a Senate investigation of the alleged $14-million secret payoff to secure the approval of the $470-million contract for the Caliraya-Botocan-Kalayaan (CBK) hydroelectric plant.

Saying he wanted to finish what Rep. Willie Villarama had started, opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson on Monday filed Senate Resolution No. 477 directing the appropriate Senate committees to inquire into "the alleged $14-million payoff that was made by Argentine firm Industrias Metalurgicas Pescarmona Sociedad Anonima (Impsa) to some government officials in exchange for the approval" of the CBK project.

Lacson said he would be submitting documents showing that money allegedly changed hands in the approval of the $470-million contract which was reportedly approved by President Macapagal-Arroyo just four days after she assumed office.

Villarama started the latest round of scandal-mongering in the Macapagal administration last week when he alleged in a privilege speech in the House that a Cabinet official, whom he referred to as the "million-dollar

$2-M MAN/ A4

PARTING'S SUCH SWEET SORROW
The classmates of 14-year-old Alvin John C. Valdez (inset) who was shot to death on Thursday night in Barangay Merville in Parañaque, are overcome with grief at his wake in South Merville School in Parañaque where the victim was a sophomore honor student and class president. ERIK ARAZAS

Gift bomb kills happy little girl

By Leoncio Balbin Jr.
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

STA. CRUZ, Ilocos Sur—It was the worst gift any family could receive.

Marjorie Lovely Caligtan, 8, was excited as she opened a package addressed to her father, Leopoldo, a former minister of the Pentecostal Church who was going to celebrate his birthday next month.

But when she opened the 12- by 8-inch brown carton box at 7 p.m. on Monday, it exploded. Marjorie Lovely was killed instantly.

Her father and two older siblings—Sheila, 14, and Ryan, 19—suffered second and third degree burns. They were taken to the Ilocos Training and Regional Medical Center in San Fernando City.

Their mother, Elvira, escaped injury because she was in the kitchen preparing dinner.

"My daughter thought the package was an advance birthday gift for her father," Elvira said.

GIFT/ A4

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Eastern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao including Palawan will be cloudy with rainshowers and thunderstorms while the rest of Luzon will experience partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/11/20/02

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Second FRONTPAGE

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

Cost of clean air: Higher fuel prices in January

By Cynthia D. Balana

ONLY one day after a maximum 25-centavo per liter rollback on fuel prices, the country's top oil companies and other small players yesterday announced they would impose an 80-centavo to P1.50 per liter increase starting January next year, when the Clean Air Act is implemented.

Representatives of the oil companies broke the news to the Senate committee on environment and natural resources during its public hearing on the forthcoming implementation.

Sen. Robert Jaworski, committee chair, said the price hikes might be tough for consumers, but that the law had to take effect as scheduled.

Senate President Franklin Drilon, Majority Leader Loren Legarda and Sen. Manuel Villar earlier withdrew a previous resolution they filed seeking to suspend the CAA's implementation for one year.

As reasons for the withdrawal, the three lawmakers cited adequate supply of oil in the world market, and Iraq's decision to allow United Nations inspectors to inspect its alleged weapons of mass destruction.

"The threat of an attack by the US (has been) put off," Drilon said. "(Our) proposed suspension is no longer valid."

Jaworski said the projected January price increase was not too steep a price to pay for "clean" fuel that would be better for the environment and public health.

He said oil companies' compliance with the CAA provision of reducing the toxic levels of gasoline was "almost certain."

He also foresaw a "minimal" increase in taxi fares as a result of the increased cost of "clean" gasoline.

Jaworski's committee will next focus on the diesel component of the fuel used largely by public utility vehicles.

The Department of Transportation and Communications reported during the hearing that it had impounded 6,000 smoke-emitting, diesel-fed vehicles as of this week.

LAOAGAIR CRASH

Rescue heroes get rewards from GMA

By Carlito Pablo

THE RESCUERS of some passengers of the Laoag International Airlines plane that crashed into Manila Bay last week received an early Christmas gift from President Macapagal-Arroyo at Malacañang yesterday.

Fishermen-brothers Edgar and Crispulo Naga each received a P50,000 check from Ms Macapagal who extolled the two, along with Edgar's sons—Elorde, 12, and Rico, 15—as "heroes of the nation."

Back to school

Edgar said he will use the President's gift to send his sons, who had stopped studying due to poverty, back to school.

The four were out at sea on Nov. 11 when they saw the LIA Fokker plane go down into Manila Bay.

They rushed to the crash site and were able to rescue three female passengers and a male foreigner. In all, 19 people died in the accident while 15 others, including the pilot and co-pilot, were rescued.

Like his brother Edgar, Crispulo said he will use his P50,000 to send his three children to school.

The four were among several rescuers who pulled the victims from the water and passed them on to other persons on the seawall, who rushed the injured to nearby hospitals.

The plane, LIA flight 585, was headed for Laoag City from Manila when, amateur video showed, its propellers stopped turning and smoke was trailing from one engine.

The plane's pilot, Capt. Bernie Crisostomo, had earlier told the INQUIRER the Fokker 27's engines had quit soon after takeoff and as he was attempting to bring it back to the Manila domestic airport for an emergency landing.

But yesterday, Crisostomo appeared to backtrack from his statement. He said the plane was airworthy before it took off that fateful Monday morning. He said he would not have flown the aircraft if he thought that it was not safe to do so.

'Well-maintained'

"The aircraft was well-maintained," Crisostomo said in a new statement. "Let's just wait for the results of the investigation."

Assistant Secretary Adelberto Yap, chief of the Air Transportation Office, said the investigation would not take long. He said yesterday he was confident the Fokker's flight data recorder or "black box" would point to the cause of the crash.

"We have the pilots, the black box and eyewitnesses. It would not be very difficult to investigate the case," Yap said.

The Department of Transportation and Communications has taken over the investigation from the ATO. The probe panel is headed by Undersecretary Arturo Valdez.

Capt. Paul Ng, chairm and chief executive officer of LaoagAir, has assured the survivors and the deceased passengers' families that the airline will use all its resources to help them.

Memorial service

In a letter to the crash victims and their families, Ng said: "We assure you that we are doing our best to minimize (your) pain and suffering and if there is anything we can do at this time to assuage your feelings, please do not hesitate to let us know."

At a memorial service on Nov. 18 for the victims of the crash, LaoagAir president Jose Miranda said the airline was taking care of all the medical and other needs of the survivors at the San Juan de Dios, St. Luke's and UST hospitals and at the Ospital ng Maynila.

Earlier, LaoagAir spokesperson Alvin Manuel Yater said the relatives of the deceased victims will receive compensation from LIA's insurer, Heat Lambert. *With Norman Bordadora*

Italian engineer slain in ambush

STA. CRUZ, Laguna—An Italian engineer working as consultant for the National Power Corp. was ambushed along the national highway in Barangay Layasin, Cavinti town at about 2:30 p.m. on Monday.

Police said Dario Patrizi, 61, was on his way to work at Napocor's Botocan project in nearby Luisiana town, when armed men blocked the road and fired at his blue Nissan Terrano.

Chief Supt. Enrique Galang, Southern Tagalog police director, said Patrizi's body was found inside the Terrano with a bullet wound in the left chest.

Motive for the attack has not been established.

Insp. Roy Camarillo of the Calamba City Police found a .9mm-caliber shell at the crime scene.

The victim was temporarily residing at the Payzenzian Hotel.

A second Italian consultant for Napocor, Domenico di Candia, was being interviewed by police after the killing. Di Candia, 56, stayed at the same hotel.

The body is now in Balubayan Funeral parlor.

Comelec needs P200M for poll attaches

By Rocky Nazareno

THE COMMISSION on Elections needs P200 million more in its 2003 budget to deploy "election attaches" abroad in time for the implementation of the Absentee Voting Law in 2004.

This came out during the Senate finance committee hearing on the Comelec budget yesterday.

Finance committee chair Sen. Francis Pangilinan said the Comelec was asking for the P200 million in addition to the P1 billion that had been allocated for the conduct of elections for overseas Filipinos.

Pangilinan noted the Comelec's assertion that under the Constitution, all election processes—whether held locally or abroad—should be conducted by the Comelec and not the Department of Foreign Affairs.

"The Constitution is very clear on this and we must provide the funds for the Comelec to fulfill its constitutional mandate," Pangilinan said.

During the Senate hearing, Comelec chair Benjamin Abalos admitted that the proposed Absentee Voting Law gives greater weight to the DFA, through its embassies and consular offices, in the conduct of the overseas elections over Comelec.

Abalos stressed that the Comelec needs to post its own officials at the embassies and consular offices "to ensure the secrecy and sanctity of the votes cast."

"In the Middle East, for example, employers could even demand to see who their (Filipino) employees are voting for. (The Comelec) would have to make sure of the security of the votes and the voters' freedom of choice," Abalos told the committee.

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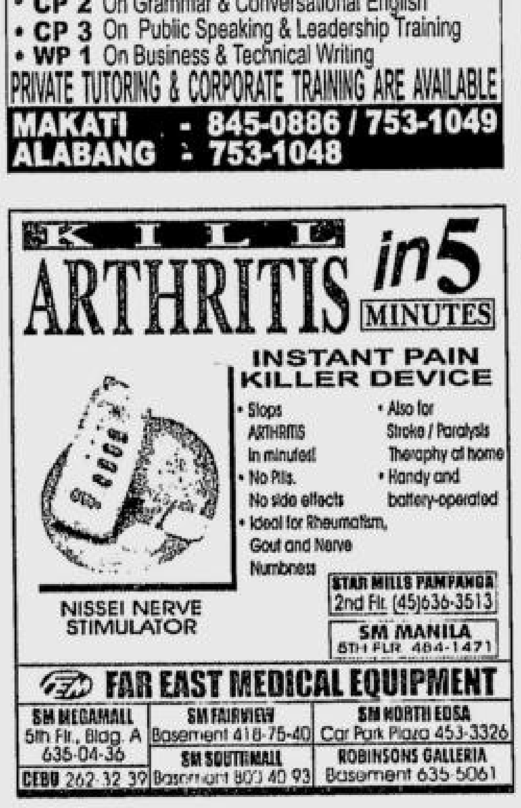

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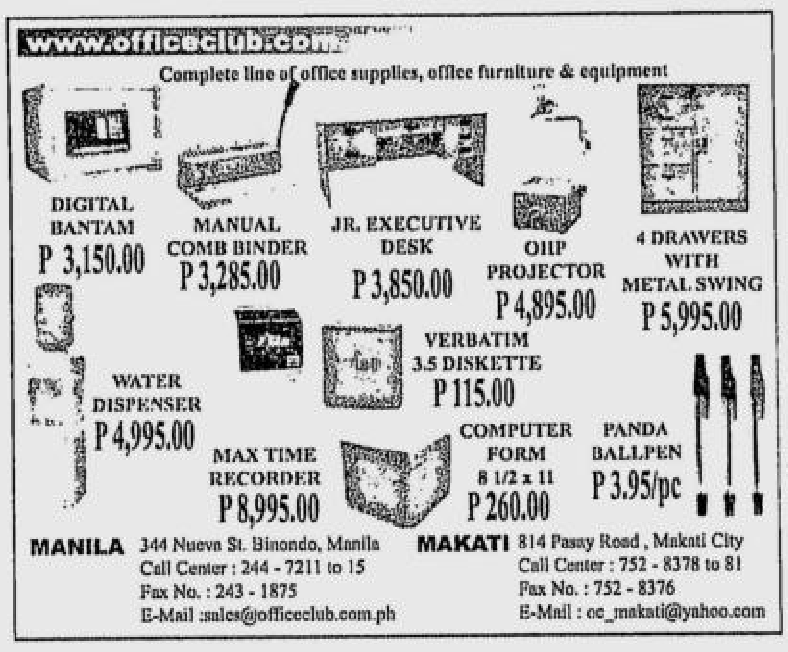

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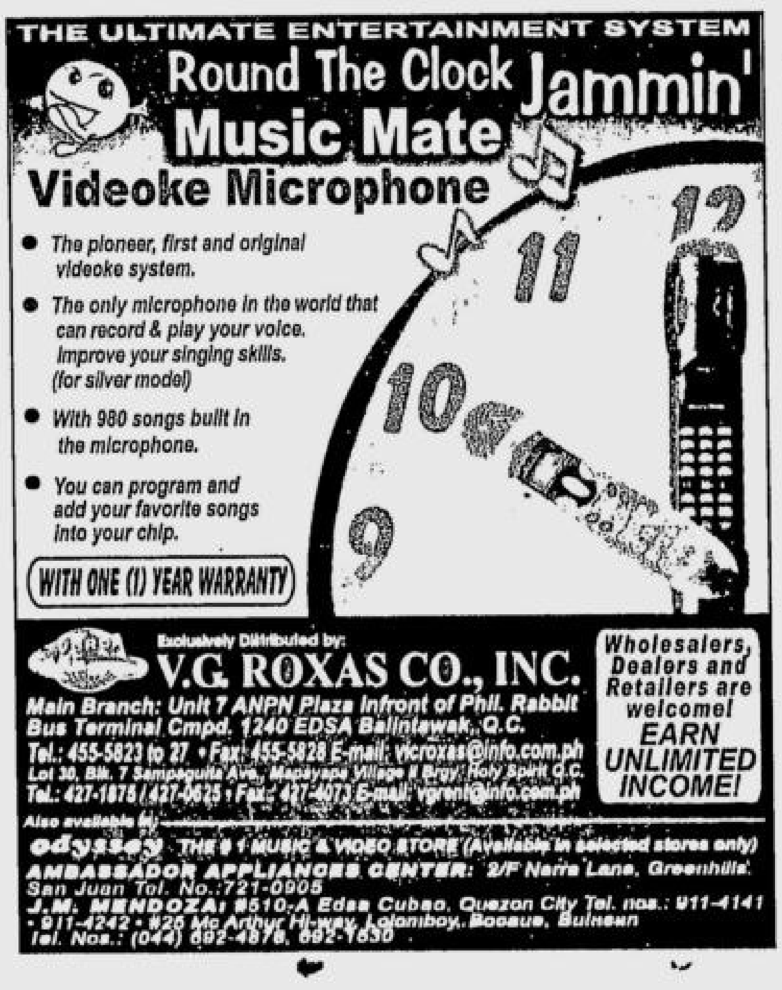

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PLDT justifies layoffs amid threat of strike

By Abigail L. Ho

EVEN with the threat of a massive strike, telecommunications giant Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. said it was going through with its planned layoffs and reassignments.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, PLDT corporate secretary Ma. Lourdes Rausa-Chan explained that the company was only responding to the huge drop in the volume of operator-assisted calls, particularly in the provinces, when it made the decision to let go of some 500 telephone operators.

"In recent years, the use of operator-assisted calls have drastically declined because of the popularity of direct dialing and other alternative means of communications. Consequently, approximately 500 employees manning the regional operator services, where volumes have (been) significantly reduced, will be separated from service with (an) enhanced retirement/redundancy package, effective Dec. 31, 2002," she said.

Rausa-Chan added that not all of these regional telephone operators would be retrenched as some would be reassigned to PLDT's directory assistance (114) center in Sampaloc, Manila.

The PLDT rank-and-file union, the Manggagawa ng Komunikasyon sa Pilipinas (MKP), filed a notice of strike with the labor department more than a week ago.

Since then, officials of PLDT management and the union have twice sat down for "conciliation talks"—yesterday and on Nov. 13.

In a separate statement, PLDT said it was still in talks with the union officers and remained hopeful that their differences would be resolved as soon as possible.

"PLDT management respects and honors the right of our employees to voice out their opinions in whatever lawful manner is available to them. Presently, both management and the union are in discussions and we remain hopeful that the matter may be resolved at the soonest time possible," the company said.

MKP president Pete Pinlac earlier said that if the management's response was not favorable during these hearings, the employees would have no choice but to push through with their planned strike next month.

He said the union's 7,000 members were more than capable of crippling the carrier's operations.

Mabutas, 95

ESPERANZA U. Mabutas, mother of retired Court of Appeals Justice Ramon Mabutas Jr., died on Monday of heart failure. She was 95.

She was the wife of the late Ramon U. Mabutas Sr., nephew of former President Elpidio Quirino.

She is survived by her children and inlaws former appellate court Justice Ramon Jr. and wife Eloisa; Rosalina and Gaudencio Daarol; Renato and Honorata; Rodolfo and Josefina; Mari Toni; and grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Her remains lie at the Funeraria Paz on Araneta Avenue in Quezon City. Interment would be announced later.

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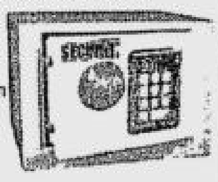

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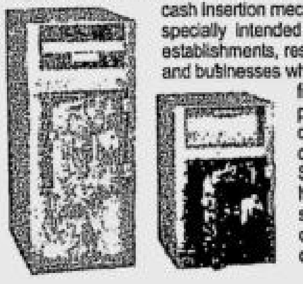

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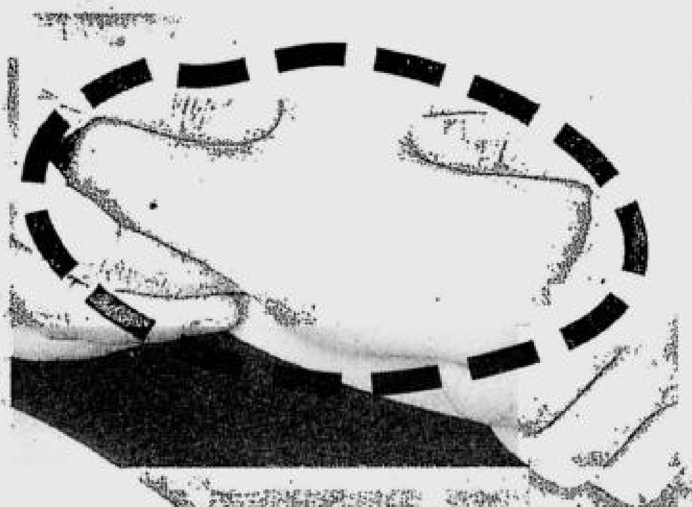

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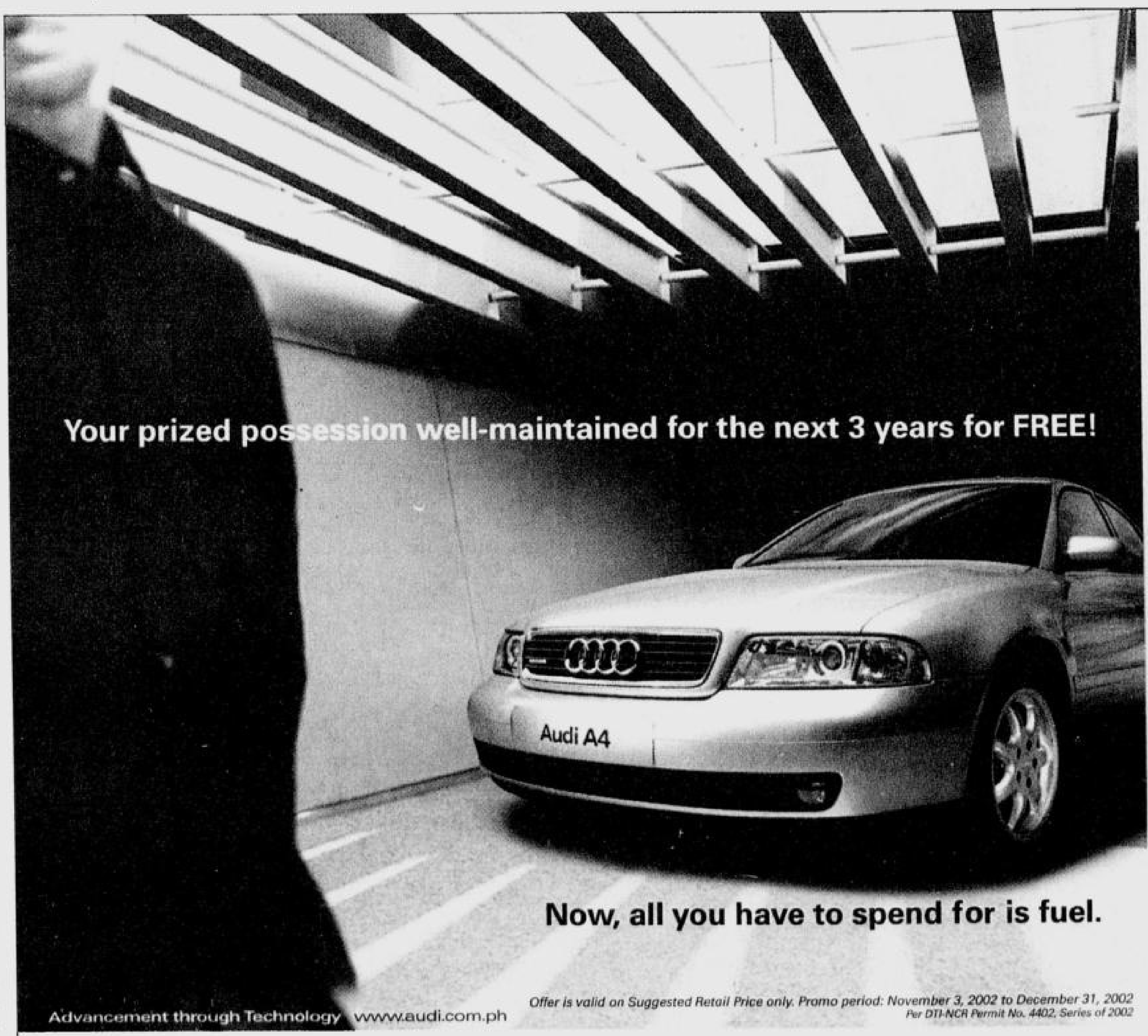

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Christmas in March? Yes, says Post Office

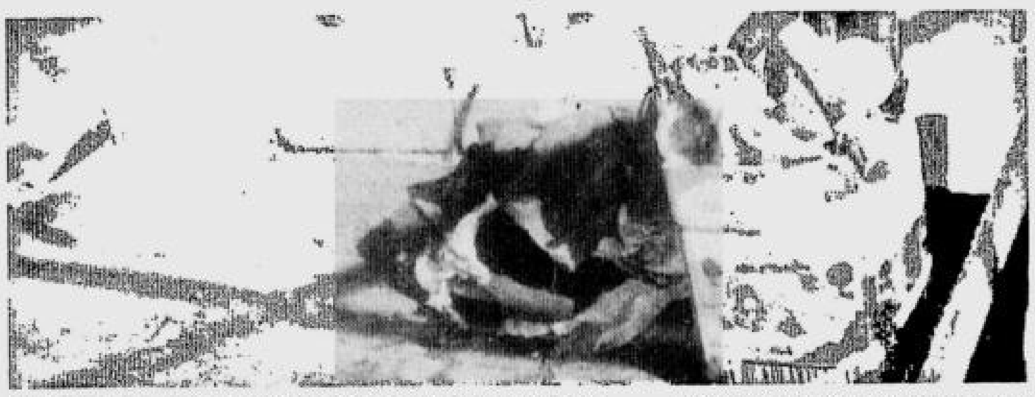
FILIPINOS may end up getting their Christmas mail three months late due to stringent inspections made necessary by the threat of global terrorism, postal officials said.

"We are carefully scrutinizing each package to make sure that there would be no letter bombs or other terrorist packages," said a senior official of the Philippine Postal Corp.

The postal official, who asked not to be named, said each package was being subjected to a "nose" test by bomb-sniffing dogs, and sought the public's patience and understanding if Christmas presents arrive in March instead.

"Even those that were sent in September . . . could still be delayed," he said, adding that this could apply for both local and foreign parcels and packages.

Postmaster General Nicasio Rodriguez has hired extra personnel to help handle the expected surge in mail, as well as to prevent "the possibility of terrorist attacks through parcels and letters," the official said. *AFP*



THE KILLER package contained assorted firecrackers. LEONCIO BALBIN JR./NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

Gift bomb kills happy little girl

From page A1

She said the gift came from Barangay Calimugtong in Galimuyod, her husband's hometown. Leopoldo's relatives, however, denied sending the gift.

Tricycle driver Elias Jandoc said a man gave him P70 to deliver the package to the Caligtan residence. But he said he did not get a good look at the man's face because it was dark and he was busy fixing his tricycle.

"*Napateg dayta manong* (It is very precious)," Jandoc quoted the man as saying before he was given the money.

Police later recovered from the scene a battery, an improvised igniter, assorted firecrackers, electric wires and pieces of carton.

Motive: revenge

Senior Insp. Fabiano Sudario Jr., Sta. Cruz police chief, said investigators were looking into revenge as the motive of the attack.

"We received information that Leopoldo has several unpaid debts in Galimuyod and there is a possibility that somebody could have done it for revenge," he told the INQUIRER.

Sudario ruled out terrorism as a motive.

"If it was a terrorist act, it should have been done in a crowded area," he said.

But Vice Mayor Jose Ping-ay, whom the Caligtans had sought assistance from, said the explosive package could have been part of concerted terrorist activities.

"The improvised bomb could not be made by just an ordinary fellow (because making a bomb) needs expertise and training," he said.

Shoebox at parking area

In Dagupan City, a shoebox left by a customer at the Jollibee restaurant caused a three-hour traffic jam on Monday.

Larry Sinang, Jollibee security guard, called the police when he noticed a plastic bag at the store's parking area. He said he thought the box contained a bomb.

Supt. Noli Talino, Dagupan police chief, sent his men to cordon off the area as bomb experts opened the box. The box yielded only a pair of ladies' shoes. *With reports from Gia Damaso-Dumo and Yolanda Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

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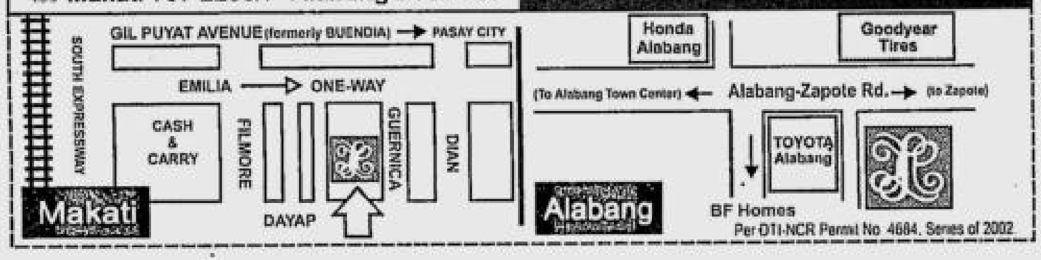

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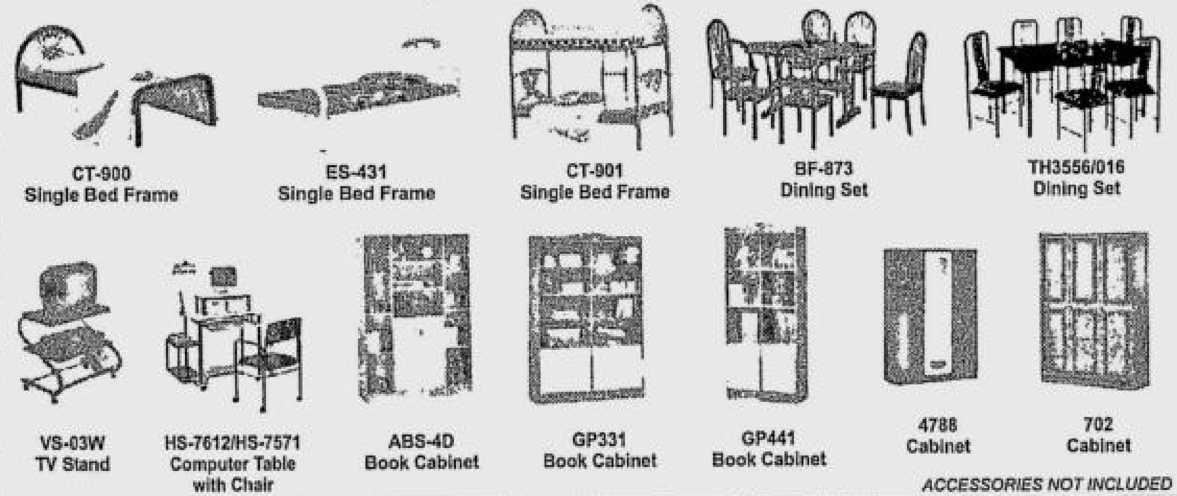

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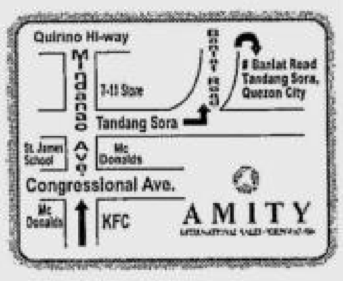

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$2-M man not yet off the hook; Senate sets quiz

From page A1

man," had accepted a $2-million bribe from a crony of Estrada to approve the Impsa deal.

The resulting media speculation forced Justice Secretary Hernando Perez to dare Villarama to "name names."

Senate President Franklin Drilon said the Lacson resolution would be transmitted to the Senate blue ribbon committee chaired by Sen. Joker Arroyo.

Opposition Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said that it was possible that in the resulting Senate probe, Estrada and House legislators Mark Jimenez and Villarama would be invited to testify.

It would also mean that the identity and the mystery of the so-called "million-dollar man" would be revealed, Pimentel said.

Pimentel noted that it might be necessary to invite Estrada to a Senate probe so he could "share with us his knowledge of supposed bribery attempts tried during his administration."

Arroyo, however, immediately shot down the idea, saying that inviting Estrada to appear in a Senate hearing "would set a bad precedent that former presidents could be at the mercy of the Senate (to appear in hearings) once they are no longer presidents."

"As for Jimenez and Villarama, inter-parliamentary courtesy dictates that they not be compelled to appear (at the Senate hearing)," Arroyo said.

The Senate investigation would also summon businessman Ernest Escaler and Ramon Arceo Jr. under whose names overseas bank accounts were allegedly set up to launder the alleged Impsa bribe money.

Arceo is a brother-in-law of the justice secretary.

Pimentel said, however, he could not yet say at this point if Perez should be summoned to the probe.

"But once we establish the foundation (to summon Perez), then we will," Pimentel said.

Lacson earlier revealed that Impsa had attempted to bribe Estrada and some Estrada administration officials in seeking the approval of the CBK contract.

He claimed that Estrada had refused to sign the contract after the project got unfavorable endorsements from then Justice Secretary Artemio Tuquero, and then Trade and Industry Secretary Jose Pardo.

Lacson said Jimenez had knowledge of the bribery deal and the recipients of the payoffs that resulted in the signing of the Impsa-CBK contract in late January 2000.

Lacson also confirmed that Jimenez was the source of the documents that Villarama had in his possession when the latter delivered his speech at the House on Nov. 12 denouncing the alleged Impsa payoff and naming the recipient as "the million-dollar man."

In his resolution, Lacson said "it appears that the decision to approve the contract was due to the legal opinion rendered by (Justice) Secretary Hernando Perez that reversed the former opinion of then Justice Secretary Tuquero."

"In exchange for the presidential approval of the Impsa contract, $14 million was allegedly deposited in the Trade and Commerce Bank in Uruguay," Lacson said.

Lacson claimed that "of this alleged $14 million (payoff), $2 million allegedly found its way to the bank account of one Ernest Escaler and a certain Ramon Arceo Jr. with the Coutts Bank in Hong Kong."

He added that the $2 million was then "allegedly transferred to the Hang Seng Bank Hong Kong where it is now currently deposited."

Lacson underscored "the need to unmask the identity of this government official/s who facilitated the approval of a contract disadvantageous to the government for some consideration, monetary or otherwise..."

Arceo yesterday denied that he was the owner of the Hong Kong bank account or accounts where the $2 million was allegedly deposited.

"I deny having any deposit account in Coutts Bank, Hong Kong in the past or now. Neither do I have an account in Hang Seng Bank. I have never opened any such account for myself or for anybody. I also deny being in Hong Kong on or about Feb. 25, 2001."

He also denied being involved with Impsa or knowing Mark Jimenez.

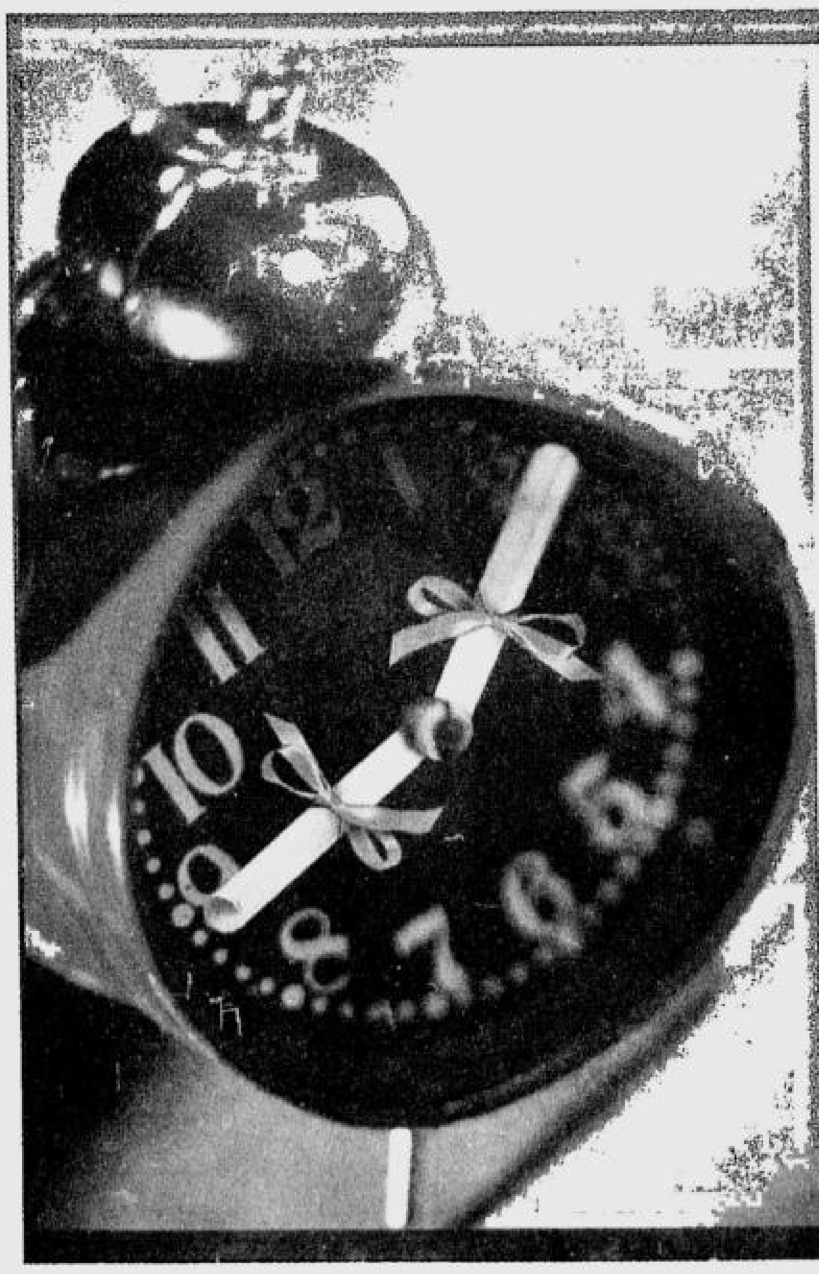
Arceo said "lies" were being propagated in the media that were politically motivated.

He said the allegations were so "absurd" that he felt "that the liars and the writers who were riding on these false accusations were actually insulting the intelligence of the Filipino people."

"Who would believe that such amount of money would be given to somebody who was not even a decision maker in the transaction?" Arceo said.

The CBK power project in Laguna, a joint venture between Impsa and the US-based Edision Mission Energy, has been dogged by controversy from the beginning.

Starting with an unsolicited proposal from Impsa in 1993 for a 25-year rehabilitation of the Laguna-Quezon hydroelectric plant, the project has had to fend off accusations of overpricing, technical insufficiency and alleged irregularities attending the contract as it went through three administrations. *With a report from Michael Lim Ubac*



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'REROUTED' TO MINORITY

Senators defer Lacson report

By Rocky Nazareno

LAWMAKERS agreed last night to defer consideration of the Senate joint committee report on the alleged illegal activities of Sen. Panfilo Lacson until after all the minority senators shall have read it.

After a lengthy debate between Senate committee on public order and illegal drugs chair Robert Barbers and minority leader Vicente Sotto III, it was decided that the report would be "rerouted" to the minority members of the three concerned Senate committees.

Together with Barbers' committee, the Senate blue ribbon and national defense and security committees had previously conducted a joint probe on the alleged involvement of Lacson in kidnapping, drug trafficking and money laundering.

On June 3, just hours before an attempt by the minority to reorganize the Senate, the three panels came up with Joint Committee Report (JCR) 66, recommending that the Department of Justice further investigate the accusations against Lacson.

After the administration coalition regained the Senate majority, it was agreed on July 17 that the committee report be withdrawn and returned to the bills and index division to await a slot in the calendar of ordinary business (COB).

LACSON: Accused of kidnapping, drug trafficking, and money-laundering.

Sotto asked why the minority senators were not allowed to read the report when it was first submitted for inclusion in the COB.

"A little more courtesy should be extended to the minority," Sotto said.

Barbers said there was no intention of ignoring the minority when the report was filed. "In fact," he said, "we gave in to a request by (opposition) Sen. Aquilino Pimentel for an extension of the hearing, which we wanted to terminate last Oct. 5."

Sotto then asked about the "parliamentary status" of JCR 66 which, based on "Senate tradition," he said, should be considered "recommitted" to the three panels.

Majority Leader Loren Legarda-Leviste explained that the report was not "automatically recommitted" but was instead "floating at the bills and index division awaiting calendaring."

Putting his foot down on his stand, Sotto sought a ruling from the presiding officer, Sen. Juan Flavier.

Legarda quickly asked for a recess.

Following nearly 20 minutes of deliberation after the break, Legarda announced that the arguing senators had agreed to "reroute" the committee report to the minority senators, "for their signature or dissent."

Perez suspends prisons director over cellphones

By Michael Lim Ubac

JUSTICE Secretary Hernando Perez suspended yesterday the director of the National Bilibid Prisons (NBP) for the proliferation of cellular phones within the NBP's maximum security compound.

Perez sacked NBP Director Gregorio Agalo-os after a convicted illegal recruiter was able to victimize more than 200 jobseekers from his detention cell using his cellular phone.

Besides Agalo-os, Perez also relieved Agalo-os' deputy, Catalino Malinao, who was in-charge of the NBP's maximum security compound, and some NBP guards.

Perez said Bureau of Corrections Director Ricardo Macala had already ordered an investigation of the matter.

"They were ordered to explain in 24 hours," said Perez, quoting Macala's order to Agalo-os and Malinao.

"I asked Director Macala to investigate further. The convicts should be prevented from performing alleged illegal activities from the NBP," said Perez.

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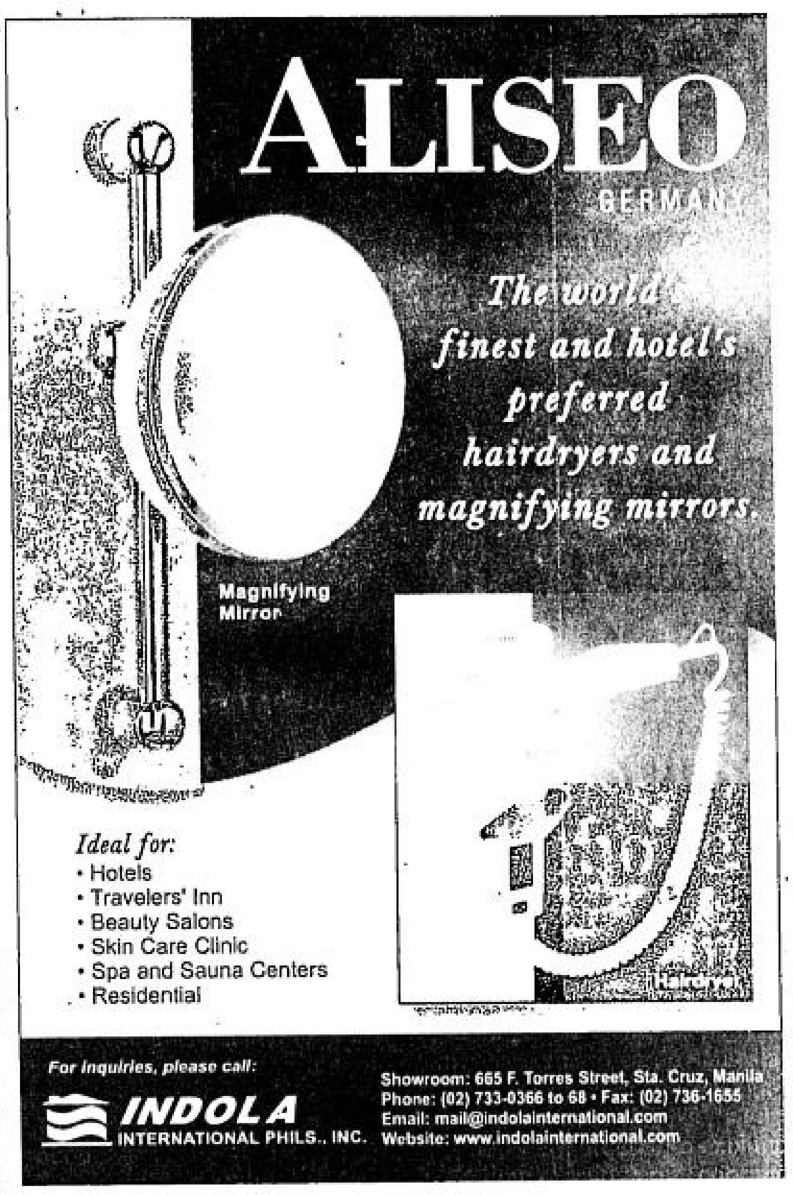

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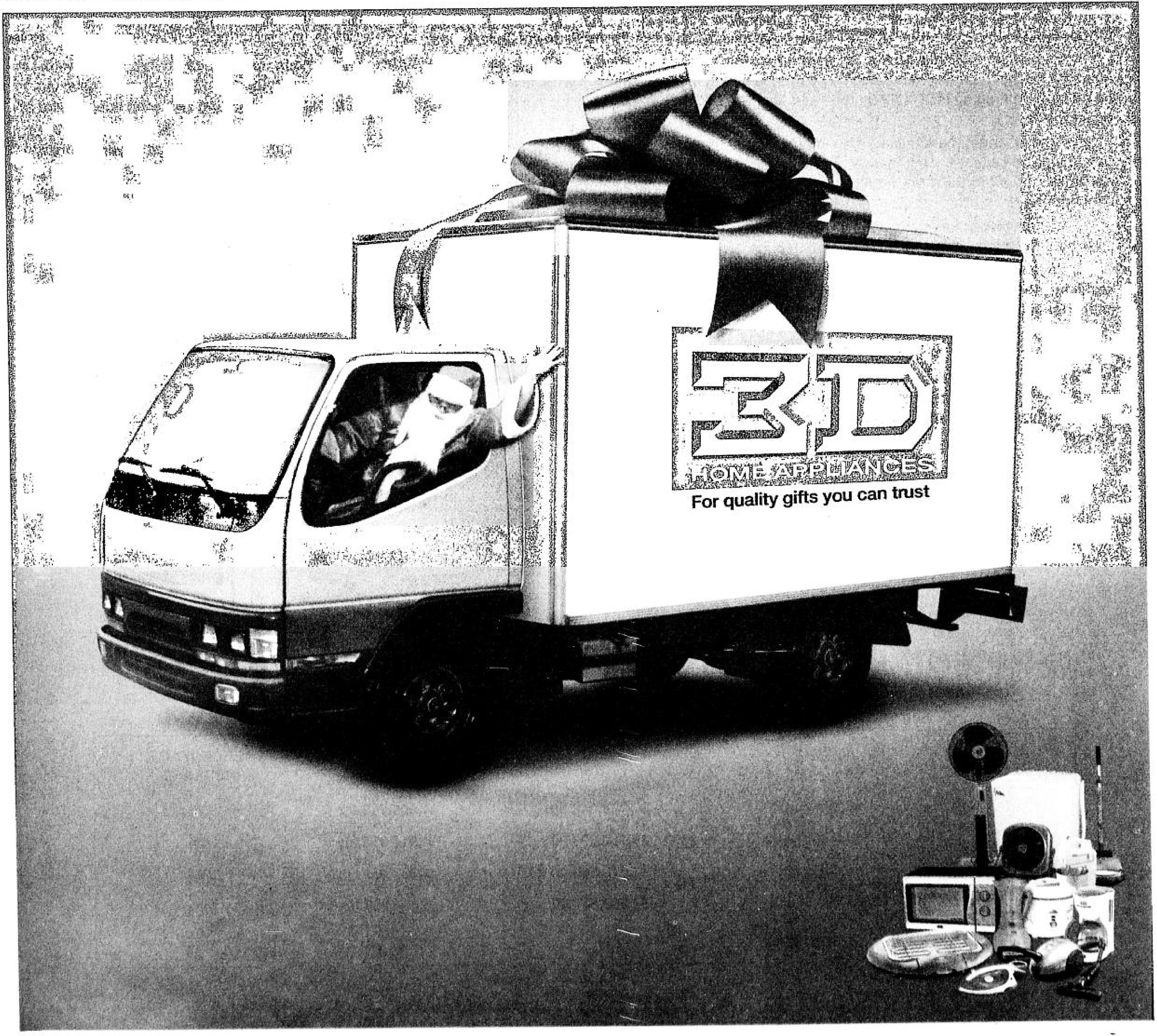

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Ang tuluy-tuloy na pagtaas ng importasyon ng karne (baka, baboy at manok, buffalo), powdered egg, bigas, gulay, prutas, isda at iba pa ang siyang pumapatay sa kabuhayan at kinabukasan ng milyun-milyon nating magsasaka at mangangalaga ng hayop. Patuloy ang pagbaba ng presyo (farm gate price) ng aming mga alaga at pananim dahilan sa pagdagsa ng imported na produkto sa ating bansa.

17% o halos 17 Million na kilo ang itinaas na bilang ng inimportang karne kung ikukumpara sa naging importasyon natin mula Enero hanggang Setyembre noong 2001 at ngayong 2002. Noong 2001, mahigit 99 milyong kilo ng karne ang inimporta sa ating bansa. Ngayong taon ito, tumaas sa mahigit 116.8 milyong kilo ng karne ang ating inimporta, hindi pa kabilang dito ang ipinupuslit o smuggled na karne.

Kung tutuusin ay di na natin kailangang mag-importa ng mga karne, bigas, gulay, prutas at isda dahil kaya namang punan ng ating mga mangangalaga ng hayop at mga magsasaka ang pangangailangan nating mga Pilipino.

Ang patuloy na pagtaas ng importasyon, legal man o puslit, ang siyang papatay sa ating lokal na industriyang pang agrikultura. Bilang isang bansang agrikultural, ang pagbagsak ng ating lokal ng agrikultura ay katumbas ng pagbagsak ng ating bansa.

Mas nanaisin pa ba nating mapagbuti ang pakikipagkalakalan natin sa ibang bansa ayon sa Trade Liberalization Act kaysa sa kapakanan ng ating mga magsasaka? Hahayaan na ba nating mamatay ang ating industriyang pang-agrikultura dahilan lamang sa importasyon? Hahayaan po ba nating magkaroon pa ng pangkalahatang pagproprotesta o National Day of Protest ang ating magsasakang Pilipino upang maiparating lamang sa kinauukulan ang aming hinaing?

Hindi po lingid sa ating kaalaman na ang kahirapan ay kadalasang nagbubunga ng karahasan. Hahayaan na po ba nating tuluyang maghirap ang ating mga magsasaka sa kanayunan at hayaang lalong lumaganap ang terorismo ng dahilan lamang sa kahirapan?

Hinihiling po naming kaagad limitahan, kontrolin o itigil ang pag-iimporta ng karne, powdered egg, isda, bigas, gulay at prutas para sa ikabubuti, di lamang ng milyung-milyong mga magsasakang Pilipino, kundi pati na rin ng ating buong sambayanan.

Maraming salamat po. MABUHAY ANG PILIPINAS!

Lubos na gumagalang,

NICANOR M. BRIONES
Pangulo
Limcoma Multi-Purpose Cooperative
Lipa, Batangas

MAGSASAKANG PILIPINO, MAGKAISA

Ang tuluy-tuloy na pagtaas ng importasyon ng karne (baboy, baka at manok), isda, gulay, prutas, at powdered egg ang siyang dahilan ng pagkalugi at pagkaubos ng puhunan nating mga magsasaka at mangangalaga ng hayop at isda.

Ayon sa Bureau of Animal Industry, sa importasyon na lamang ng karne ng baka, baboy, buffalo at manok, 17% na ang itinaas o halos 17 na milyong kilo ng karne kung ikukumpara sa importasyon natin noong Enero hanggang Setyembre noong nakaraang taon. Sa kabuuan, mahigit na 116.8 milyong kilo ng karne ang naimporta mula Enero hanggang Setyembre ngayong taong kasalukuyan.

Ang patuloy na pagtaas ng importasyon ang siyang nagiging dahilan ng pagbaba ng halaga (farm gate price) ng ating mga alaga at pananim.

Bilang ehemplo, ang farm gate price ng baboy ay bumaba ng 21% mula P70.00 noong buwan ng Mayo 2002 hanggang P55.00 na lamang noong buwan ng Oktubre. Ito katumbas ng P1,200 na pagkalugi sa bawat isang baboy na inaalagaan.

Sa Limcoma Multi-purpose Cooperative na lamang ng Lipa, Batangas, kung saan may 5,500 na miyembrong mag-aalaga ng baboy at manok, halos P306 Milyon na ang kabuuang pagkalugi ng aming mga miyembro. Ayon sa tala, ang lahat ng mag-aalaga ng baboy sa ating bansa ay nawalan ng humigi't-kumulang na P11.63 Bilyon mula Abril 2002 o P1.66 Bilyon kada buwan dahilan sa patuloy na pagbababa ng farm gate price ng baboy dulot ng importasyon.

Kinakailangan ba talagang mag-importa, legal man o puslit, ng ganito karaming mga produkto ang ating pamahalaan? Di ba kayang punan nating mga magsasaka at mangangalaga ng hayop at isda ang pangangailangan ng ating kapwa Pilipino? Pikit-bulag na ba nating hahayaang tuluyang mamatay ang ating lokal na industriyang pang-agrikultura? Hahayaan na ba nating tuluyan nang lamunin ng importasyon ang ating maliliit na ikinabubuhay?

Kung ngayong taong ito ay napakalaki na ng nawawala sa ating mga magsasaka, paano na lamang sa taong 2004 kung saan lahat na ng klase ng produkto ay maaaring maimporta sa ating bansa?

Sa lahat ng mga magsasaka ng gulay, prutas, bigas at mangangalaga ng baboy, baka, manok at isda na nagnanais na iparating sa ating kasalukuyang pamahalaan ang ating masaklap na kinalalagyan bunga ng patuloy na pagtaas na importasyon, magkaisa tayong lahat. Sama-sama nating ipaglaban ang ating karapatan bilang Pilipino. Kapit-bisig nating ipaglaban ang ating ikinabubuhay.

Inaanyayahan namin ang lahat ng magsasakang Pilipino, anumang sektor ng agrikultura, sa isang pangkalahatang pagpupulong, upang sama-sama nating maiparating ang ating mga hinaing sa pamahalaan at sa buong bayan. Sa karagdagang impormasyon, maaari kayong tumawag sa telepono bilang (043) 756,2578, (043) 756-1841 at (02) 723-0230 o sumulat sa Limcoma Multi-purpose Cooperative, Sabang, Lipa, Batangas. Maaari din kayong makipag-ugnayan sa amin sa pamamagitan ng e-mail sa limcoma@hotmail.com.

Magsasakang Pilipino, magkaisa tayo! Sama-sama nating ipaglaban ang ating kabuhayan at kinabukasan. Sama-sama nating isalba ang agrikulturang Pilipino!

Ang inyong abang lingkod,

NICANOR M. BRIONES
Pangulo
Limcoma Multi-Purpose Cooperative
Lipa, Batangas

IMPORTATION OF MEAT FOR THE PERIOD OF JANUARY TO SEPTEMBER 2001 AND JANUARY TO SEPTEMBER 2002 (IN KILOS)

	2001	2002	INCREASE IN KILOS	PERCENTAGE INCREASE
PORK	32,199,700.00	37,108,449.00	4,908,749.00	15%
BEEF	24,269,313.00	29,187,329.00	4,918,016.00	20%
POULTRY	9,980,210.00	13,313,649.00	3,333,439.00	33%
BUFFALO	33,425,960.00	37,260,317.00	3,834,357.00	11%
TOTAL	99,875,183.00	116,869,744.00	16,994,561.00	17%

LIMCOMA... **Atin Ito,** *Sama-sama sa Pag-asenso!*

ADVT

Military nixes Abu leader's demand

By TJ Burgonio

THE MILITARY yesterday rebuffed Abu Sayyaf leader Hamsiraji Sali for his offer to surrender on condition the armed forces stopped its offensive against the terror group.

"We (do) not entertain requests from terrorists. It would not stop the military from continuing its operations. The offer is not acceptable," said Brig. Gen. Pedro Cabuay, Armed Forces of the Philippines deputy chief of staff for civil-military operations.

Sali, who is wanted by the United States for the deaths of American hostages Guillermo Sobero and Martin Burnham, had offered to turn himself in and help the government.

But he warned that he would change his mind and go against the government again if it pressed ahead with attacks against the Abu Sayyaf.

"What could be more cruel? They (Abu Sayyaf) have done practically everything—they have bombed, they have kidnapped. That's proof more than ever that they are a terrorist group," said Cabuay of Sali's warning.

The Abu Sayyaf, which gained notoriety for kidnapping Filipinos and foreigners from exclusive resorts and holding them hostage, has been accused by the US of having links with the al-Qaida terror network of Osama bin Laden.

"Their (Abu Sayyaf) situation is becoming precarious because of the continuing operations of the military. It's possible he (Sali) fears for his life, that's why he wants to surrender," said Cabuay.

He said the military had yet to confirm Sali's claim he had broken his ties with Abu Sayyaf leader Khadaffy Janjalani because of differences in views and goals.

"We're not sure about that," Cabuay said.

Cookfest deadline reset

THE DEADLINE for entries to the "Shellane Lutong Bahay Originals 2002 Family Recipe Competition" has been extended to midnight of Friday. The semi-finals will be held on Nov. 29 in Pampanga.

The categories of the competition are: appetizers, main course and dessert.

Entries must be innovations of a classic recipe.

Applicants may be 15 years old and above, non-professionals and residents of Pampanga.

The Grand Finals shall be held on Dec. 7 at the Balle Herencia, Angeles City. Entry forms are available at Shellane dealers.

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Eugenia D. Apostol
Founding Chairman

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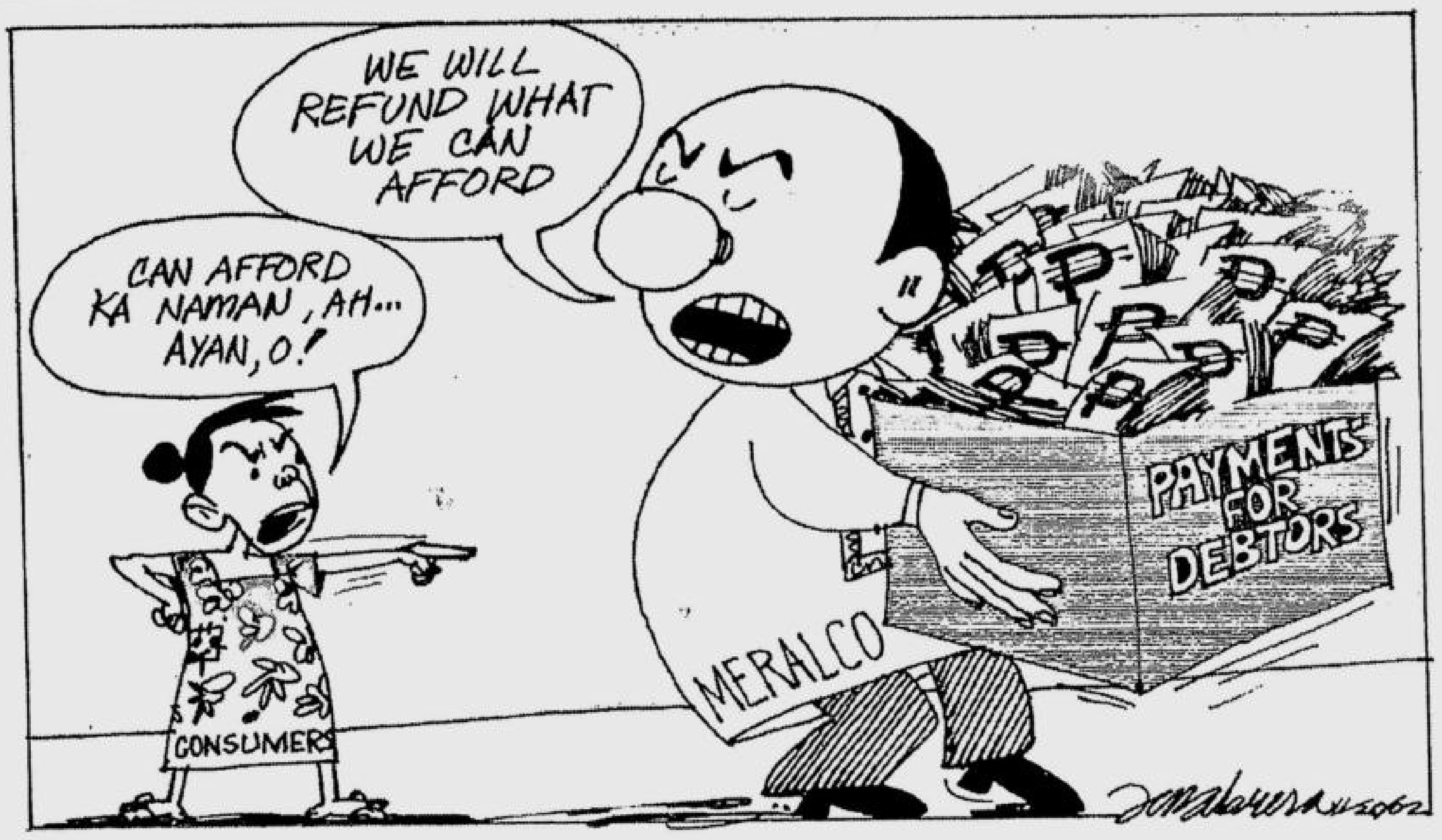

WE WILL REFUND WHAT WE CAN AFFORD
CAN AFFORD KA NAMAN, AH... AYAN, O!
PAYMENTS FOR DEBTORS
MERALCO
CONSUMERS

Pay-up time

Editorial

WAS it all just hype, or is there something awfully wrong with the accounting system of the Manila Electric Co.?

As recently as two weeks ago, Meralco's lawyers were telling the Supreme Court that it would cost the company an "unimaginable P28.15 billion" to return the 16.7 centavos per kilowatt-hour that the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) claimed Meralco had been overcharging its customers since 1994. If Meralco were to be compelled to pay back that amount, the lawyers warned, not only would the company's ability to serve its customers be severely impaired, it could actually be driven to bankruptcy, leading to massive blackouts and eventually causing the collapse of the entire economy.

Now that the Supreme Court has said it should return the money anyway, Meralco is saying the amount involved may not even come up to one-third of the figure it was quoting. Its president, Jesus Francisco, told newsmen that depending on whether it would be allowed to report income tax payments as part of operating expenses, it might have to refund its customers only up to the year 1999, in which case the total would reach only P8 billion. Until the court decision becomes executory, he said, any figures being thrown around concerning the refund would be "speculative."

It seems rather strange that Meralco would complain about speculations concerning the mandated refund. Militant groups have calculated that households could get anywhere between P3,400 and P5,200 from Meralco. Agham, a group of scientists, said that if the payments are made over a period of eight years, then every household can expect to get P33 monthly. However, all these estimates were based on Meralco's own initial estimate of P28.15 billion. Would Meralco officials perhaps be happier if the same groups revised their estimates downward? Or shouldn't its customers start worrying that the refunds due them might shrink into insignificance by some accounting wizardry?

There's a more pernicious form of speculation going on, and it is happening in the stock market where the price of Meralco shares plummeted 40 percent last Monday. And this is not so much because the Supreme Court interpreted the law as that Meralco's prediction of doom is turning into a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Instead of spooking speculators, Meralco would be doing itself a lot of good if it simply began planning how it could compensate the customers it has overcharged for many years. It cannot bank on the possibility that the Supreme Court en banc would reverse the unanimous decision of one of its divisions. (The long process of litigation is the reason the refundable amount grew so huge, in the first place.)

The Court has laid down two options. One is an outright refund, and the other is to credit consumers with the refundable amount in their future billings. The first would be much tougher to do—and practically impossible if it is to be given as a lump sum, as some militant groups are demanding. The second will still represent a big financial drain that will have an impact on the company's profitability and services.

A third option, floated by several lawmakers, appears to be the least painful. This is paying the consumers with shares of stocks in the power firm. This way there will be no cash out on the part of the company, and consumers can convert their shares to cash by simply selling them.

It may not be one of the modes of repayment set by the Supreme Court, but it can be done if Meralco can get the ERC to approve it and tell the court about it. Such a repayment scheme may be hard to sell to a public that generally knows very little about the stock market, but the exercise could prove to be more fruitful than trying to scare everyone into writing off billions it owes its consumers.

A beautiful idea

Foreign Comment

NO to arms, yes to talks. A beautiful idea which must be pursued as far as possible. Let's then leave aside our suspicion that the latest UN resolution is but a prelude to an inevitable war. We have to support chief UN weapons inspector Hans Blix. We have to denounce Saddam's bloody dictatorship.

And we have to do it now if we still want to have a significant say on what will happen from now until February. *La Repubblica (Rome)*

Opposition senator may be next Senate president

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

IF there is a revamp of the Senate, the new Senate president may neither be Renato Cayetano nor Franklin Drilon again. It could be Sen. Edgardo Angara or some other member of the opposition bloc in the Senate.

Angara was the guest at the Kapihan sa Manila last Monday during which he explained the situation and distribution of forces in the upper house. There are now only 23 senators with the appointment of Blas Ople to the Department of Foreign Affairs. They are divided into 12 administration senators plus one nominal independent, Noli de Castro, and 10 opposition senators. So the division of forces could be 12-10-1, or 13-10 or, possibly, 12-11.

If the administration senators will vote as one, they can surely elect their candidate as president of the Senate. But they have two candidates: Drilon and Cayetano. Their votes will necessarily be split and neither bloc would have the required majority. The opposition senators of 10, on the other hand, are united. In case of a three-way split, the opposition can outvote the other two blocs and elect its own candidates. The best thing that can happen to the administration is a deadlock since the opposition doesn't have a clear majority—and Drilon will stay as president.

But will Cayetano be amenable to that? He and Drilon had an agreement to split the term of the Senate presidency between them. Drilon's half ends in December. Cayetano would like to begin his own half in accordance with their "gentleman's agreement."

But Drilon says that is an agreement only between the two of them, and does not bind the other senators, especially members of the opposition. Putting the Senate presidency to a vote would, therefore, be a free-for-all in which the opposition, if it remains united, has the numbers.

* * *

On the Cabinet revamp, Angara thinks all the resignations are just grandstanding. He agrees that the President can revamp the Cabinet at any time, with or without resignations. It is accepted that a department secretary's tenure lasts only as long as the President has confidence in him. When he or she loses that confidence for any reason, then it's goodbye.

What about a revamp of the whole government itself? Whom would he support for President: Fernando Poe Jr., a friend of his friend Erap; Panfilo Lacson, a member of the Senate opposition bloc; or former Sen. Raul Roco? Or would he himself run as the opposition standard bearer?

Angara's reply: It is too early to make choices now. Many things will still happen between now and the start of the campaign period. The early bird catches the worm, but it is the early worm that is eaten by the bird. So let's wait and see what happens next. Will FPJ finally decide to run? Will more people start guzzling Napoleon brandy because of Ping's commercial? Will Roco retain his lead spot in the surveys? Will more political leaders egg him to run? Will GMA commit more mistakes? Will her subordinates, cronies and relatives continue to drag her down? Let's wait.

Angara thinks that the 2004 presidential election is the most important election in our history. If we don't elect a President who can reverse the economic downturn, he said, then we will have reached a point of no return. From hereon, there is no way to go but down.

It is therefore very important that the people make a wise choice, choose the leader who is the best qualified to turn the economy around, Angara said.

* * *

Thirty-three pesos a month for eight years. That's how much and how long Meralco consumers will get from the P28.6-billion refund the Supreme Court has ordered. P28 billion may seem like a lot of money, but divided among millions of customers it is nothing. P33 would barely buy a half-kilo of *galunggong*. The man of the house will probably just use it to buy a small bottle of cheap gin. Or the mother of the house will just probably use it to put a bet in *jueteng* or the lottery. All that money will not help the economy one whit.

And eight years! That is a long time. At the current rate of inflation, that P33 a month will probably be worth only P5 by the eighth year. And will Meralco pay interest on the unpaid balance? It charges interest on delayed payments—and cuts electric service after the deadline—isn't it fair that it pay interest on delayed refunds, too?

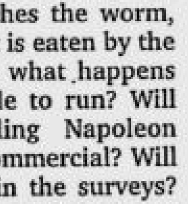
What I'm saying is that P33 a month is nothing and won't do anything to the recipient or to the economy. But put together, that little amount can total P28.6 billion, which is a lot of money any way you look at it and can do wonders to any corporation or to the economy.

The best way is to put that P28 billion in a business and make it grow for the customers. But Meralco obviously cannot pay out much in one lump sum—or in even several installments. So the next best thing is to put that in shares of stocks in Meralco in the name of the individual consumers. The consumers then become part owners of Meralco and they won't mind paying because part of the profit goes back to them in the form of dividends.

Besides, wasn't that the idea of the Lopez patriarch, Don Eugenio Sr., in his letter-proposals to President Marcos—to make the customers stockholders of Meralco?

Thefts

There's the Rub



Conrado de Quiros

I SPOKE last week in Cebu before priests and bishops in a conference on Basic Ecclesial Communities, and one of the questions they asked me was what accounted for our lack of concern for the country.

Before the open forum, I had pointed to our lack of *malasakit* for the country as one of the major stumbling blocks to our progress. I said I couldn't understand why our leaders were often mesmerized by the authoritarianism of some of our Asian neighbors and why they attributed those countries' successes to it—when those successes owed more patently to their leaders' or people's patriotism rather than to their authoritarianism. That was what made us the odd-man-out of Asia: Other Asian peoples were jealously proud of their culture and heritage, we were not. Other Asian peoples thought only now and then of living abroad, we were obsessed with it.

What made it easy for us not to care deeply about the country, I said, was the thought that we could always leave it. That was true for the rich, who sent their sons and daughters to US schools and prepared them for a life in America. That was true for the poor, who dreamt of working in Saudi Arabia and Hong Kong, and sold their carabaos, farm implements and plots of land, for it. The fact that one-fifth of the population wanted to leave the country, as one survey showed, was symptomatic of the malady.

The question now, as someone asked, was where this came from and how to overcome it.

My answer to this bears also on the question I raised in yesterday's column, which is why, despite our awesome creativity and capacity for improvisation, we lag behind our neighbors and not outstrip them. Indeed, why we use that very same creativity and capacity for improvisation more for counterproductive rather than productive ends. (I forgot to mention yesterday that Filipino accountants in the United States have a flourishing trade helping their neighbors prepare their taxes—if there's a loophole there, they'll find it.)

That answer is not that we have a "damaged culture," as James Fallows puts it. Is it not—or not just—that we have had four centuries in the convent and half a century in Hollywood, which is how he refers to our protracted experience with Spanish and American colonial rules. It is not—or not just—that we cannot recall a point in our lives before 1946 when we were free (and it remains arguable that we became so after), and so think of freedom as license, and of independence as the right, or latitude, to do anything we damn please. I grant those are powerful explanations for why we show little concern for the country, and why we tend toward anarchy and recklessness. But I think it's more than that.

I think the answer lies in that we have no past, no history, no explanation, or story, for what and why we are.

It is not that that past, that history, that story (or stories), does not exist: It is there well enough in history books, in the names of streets (particularly San Juan, which is replete with the names of heroes and the dates of seminal events in the life of the Katipunan), in national holidays, which as productivity freaks like to point out, we have more plentifully than others. It is simply that we do not see that past, we do not know that past. It is like having a gold mine but not being aware of it, or not knowing its true value. That treasure is hidden from us, and for all practical purposes it is inaccessible to us. It may as well not exist, it may as well not be there at all.

The malady of the Filipino's lack of concern for his country, or proneness to anarchy and recklessness, is related to another malady, which is his inability to remember anything. The Filipino's short memory is legendary, as the people who vow "Never again" to martial law, or its equivalents, constantly lament. The reason we keep repeating our past, as Santayana said would hound those heedless of what went before, is that we do not learn from our past, and the reason we do not learn from our past is that we do not remember our past. How can you expect the youth to remember the Katipunan when the elderly cannot even remember Edsa? Most of us do not even know there was such a thing as a Filipino-American War, or more accurately, an American occupation of the Philippines. Even if most of us do know about a Filipino-Japanese War, and a Japanese occupation of the Philippines, through FPJ and Erap, or their movies, who and which are another story entirely.

The problem is not our personality, which the theory of a "damaged culture" suggests. The "personality disorder," where it is true, is merely a symptom and owes to something deeper. That something deeper is the theft of our past. A forcible seizure by our colonizers, who wrote that history, or what passes for it (one that tells, among others, of the fall of Bataan and Corregidor and MacArthur's Mosaic return to free us from slavery), and our own willingness to part with it given the pain of remembering.

An individual who does not know where he comes from, who his parents are, what his story is, is bound to experience problems that will challenge psychiatrists. He will exhibit symptoms of rebelliousness, a lack of sense of belonging, a lack of care for what happens to him and to the people around him. Which, not quite incidentally, many Filipino youths in America, who have had their roots systematically removed from them but who do not quite fit into their new milieu, exhibit forcefully. You have no past, you have no present. You have no context, no story, no destiny. Rizal's aphorism is true: You don't know where you came from, you won't know where you're going.

What is true for individuals is true for nations as well.

What to do about it? That's another story, and best told another day.

* * *

Comments to dequiros@vasia.com

Repercussions of the Meralco decision

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

THE SUPREME Court decision ordering the Manila Electric Co. to refund 3.1 million electricity users a total of P28.5 billion in excess charges from 1994-1998 defines the Davide Court as a "giant-killer" in both economic and political terms.

The decision is as financially devastating to the Lopez family as its two decisions upholding the legitimacy of the accession to office of then Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo were politically cataclysmic to the Estrada administration in 2001.

The Meralco decision and the decisions on the Macapagal legitimacy were promulgated in the cause of "higher public interests." They were handed down at a time when the Supreme Court had been riding the crest of public confidence and credibility. Since the Meralco decision involves putting back money into the pockets of the people, it is a popular decision as it identifies the Court with electricity consumers.

It must be emphasized, however, that while the amount of refund to the individual consumer and the period within which it would be paid have not yet been determined, the big electricity users (which include industrial consumers) are expected to be the main beneficiaries.

It is almost certain that these landmark decisions, as well as the presidency of Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. at the impeachment trial of former President Estrada, will be remembered as the most important legacies of the Davide Court as the country navigates turbulent seas in the voyage toward political stability and democratic consolidation.

While the Meralco decision has many ramifications, including the political, it is undeniably a financial earthquake that has rocked the foundations of the Lopez family's multi-faceted economic empire more than any other setback suffered by it. I shall examine the economic repercussions of the decision on the family.

The Meralco decision is probably the most devastating financial crisis that has shaken the Lopez empire, hitting its crown jewel, since the Marcos dictatorship seized the family assets, including Meralco. The confiscation, in which state power was used to dismount the Lopezes, sent them to the ground. The seizure could not have succeeded if it had been done in the context of democratic politics but the family was able to recover at least the management of Meralco and expand its assets to other sectors of the economy after the restoration of democracy in 1986.

This time, the Lopez empire has been devastated not by a political adversary or by the state. The blows came from a combination of the judicial system, not obeying the command of political adversaries, and the financial crisis of 1997, which inflicted a heavy toll on the financial commitments of the over-extended Lopez enterprises—ranging from media (television) to telecommunications, metropolitan waterworks, energy production, infrastructure and real estate development (for example, Rockwell) and banking.

The question is: if the Lopezes survived the hammer blows of political adversaries (like President Diosdado Macapagal in the 1960s in his epic struggle to dismantle the oligarchy or President Marcos, whose bureaucratic capitalism confiscated the Lopez assets not on behalf of the state but to enhance his own private wealth), can the Lopezes recover from this new disaster which came on the heels of their difficulties on their cash-strapped enterprises?

The warning by the Lopez lawyers, arguing before the Supreme Court, that an adverse decision would mean the collapse of the economy, is probably overstated. But the decision has driven the Lopezes into a survival struggle to save the heart of their empire. Clearly the decision will force them to contract their Meralco operations, given the staggering disbursements for refunds. It will force them to make Meralco a tight ship, but there are wolves preying around a wounded beast. The decision came at a time when Meralco was seeking a mega-franchise to consolidate its electricity-generating units in Luzon.

Whether or not Meralco's burden of repaying will lead to the deterioration of its ability to deliver adequate electricity to the expanding industrial and commercial needs of Luzon, let alone the population rise in Metro Manila and Luzon, only time will tell.

While the Lopezes will have to perform a drastic surgery on their Meralco operations to remain viable and cut their losses in telecommunications, water service concession (Maynilad) and Rockwell, they still have considerable assets in the profitable media giant, ABS-CBN, and the electricity-generating units receiving gas from the pipelines of Malampaya. The Lopezes are also going ahead with the expansion and rehabilitation of the North Luzon Expressway.

The Lopezes are finding out that fighting disasters generated by non-political causes (such as judicial decisions and financial crisis), is tougher than overcoming political adversaries and recovering from their damage.

While the Lopezes have remarkable business acumen, identifying opportunities that others have failed to see and are visionary, they have also been successful in using their political clout to expand, if not protect, their interests. But the Lopez generation led by Geny and Oscar Lopez has operated in a more competitive environment than their father, Don Eugenio Lopez Sr., who was a key political, as well as economic, player, involved in the power struggle for the presidency.

Geny and Oscar have fewer interventions in politics and the changing political milieu after the first People Power Revolution. The milieu was not hospitable to high-profile political interventionism.

The debacle of the Lopezes on Meralco has little to do with politics. It is not, as some would imagine, a continuation of the fight between the Lopezes and President Macapagal in the 1960s.

A 'home' for 'bulilits'

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

THIS morning, as McDonald's outlets all over the world observe "World Children's Day," Social Welfare Secretary Dinky Soliman and presidential daughter Luli Macapagal Arroyo, Makati City officials, as well as officers of the local McDonald's, will gather at Barangay East Rembo in Makati for the blessing and inauguration of the first "Bahay Bulilit" Day-care Center.

The "Bahay Bulilit" or "home for the little ones" is a squat, cream-colored concrete structure sitting by the edge of C-5, just before the road leading to Fort Bonifacio. Accessible by a dirt road that slopes up an incline, "Bahay Bulilit" stands out from its surroundings. Fenced in by a low wall topped by wire, the building consists of a classroom planned to accommodate 30 preschoolers and their teacher and teaching assistants at any one time, a small kitchen and "male" and "female" bathrooms. A small yard, with a sampaloc tree in one corner will soon boast of playground equipment.

Already, "Bahay Bulilit" is becoming a neighborhood landmark, with jeepney drivers identifying it as a passenger stop. "Everyone is so grateful," says Mercy Cruz, a barangay employee who, as president of the neighborhood CIDSS (Comprehensive Integrated Delivery of Social Services), spent nearly two years painstakingly following up the needed permits with different government offices. "Everyone in the neighborhood feels like they own the day-care center, and they're so proud of the building," she adds. The property, she says, was used as a garbage dump before it was chosen as the site of the first "Bahay Bulilit," and neighbors have remarked how a spanking new building is such a pleasant change from a pile of *basura*.

* * *

BUT "Bahay Bulilit" means so much more than a neighborhood facelift. It is only the first of a planned network of barangay day-care centers all around the country, built as part of a pioneering joint effort of the government and the private sector, specifically the Ronald McDonald House Charities.

Elsewhere in the world, says Jojo Samson, executive director of RMHC Philippines, RMHC has focused on the building of "Ronald McDonald Houses," offering board and lodging for parents of seriously ill children who need medical treatment in hospitals far away from their homes. But upon the personal request of President Macapagal-Arroyo, RMHC has chosen to concentrate on the construction of day-care centers instead. "RMHC officers around the world are closely watching this project to see if it's worth duplicating in their countries as well," says Samson.

The collaboration between the DSWD and McDonald's Charities began even when Ms Macapagal was Vice President and DSWD secretary, meeting with George Yang and his son Kenneth, who is president of RMHC Philippines, on the possibility of their company's adopting day-care centers in depressed barangays as their project.

* * *

WORKING with the DSWD, RMHC began identifying possible sites, giving priority to barangays with an empty and usable lot of the right size owned by the government (or donated by a private landowner) and accessible to public transportation.

"We'd also like the first day-care centers to be near a McDonald's outlet," adds Samson, for no other reason, he hastens to add, than that the management and employees of that outlet will then "adopt" that Bahay Bulilit as its own outreach project.

"We hope this project will galvanize the country and all Filipinos to realize the need for day-care centers," Samson declares. He cites figures that dramatically illustrate the huge gap that needs to be filled, with 2,922 existing barangay day-care centers catering to just more than 89,000 beneficiaries, certainly a mere drop in the ocean of children of pre-school age who could benefit from developmental activities to bring them a "step up" when the time comes for them to start their schooling.

In Barangay East Rembo, says Mercy, they quickly filled up the quota of 120 children, four shifts daily of 30 children per class, "and many more mothers have come, asking if we could accommodate even their older children." Just the day before, she recalled laughingly, two girls, already in second grade, dropped by, "asking if they could go back to pre-school level so they could go to school in our building." With C-5 bisecting the community, says Mercy, many parents have been loath to send their children to the public school across the highway, fearing for their safety.

* * *

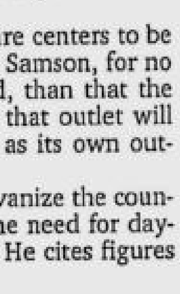
MCDONALD'S spent a total of P1 million for the first Bahay Bulilit, says Samson, but only because they found they needed to spend more than anticipated on the fencing facing C-5.

Once turned over to Barangay East Rembo, Bahay Bulilit will then fall under the responsibility of the community, led by Barangay Chair Romanito Verecio. Aside from Mercy and Verecio, another official, board member Roberto Coloma, had worked hard to process the needed papers.

A monthly fee of P50 per child will be charged for maintenance including salaries but Mercy says they would willingly accept donations of books, supplies, furniture and other needs. Mothers will also be encouraged to put in "work equity" by volunteering to prepare snacks and meals. Already, the parents' association of nearby International School has paid Bahay Bulilit a visit and expressed plans of making it one of their beneficiaries.

And without your knowing it, you may already be helping build more Bahay Bulilits, since RMHC uses 50 centavos from every "Happy Meal" sold for its projects. Children helping other children, isn't that a happy thought?

Rizal's second 'book'



LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

HISTORIANS are a strange lot. When you give them a book to read, they open the back and read the bibliography and notes before investing time in the main text. If you think that is odd, when I read for work I am more enthusiastic about the footnotes than the main text. This was how I enjoyed Jose Rizal's second published book. Contrary to popular belief, Rizal published three, not two books. "El Filibusterismo" was his second novel, his third book. This seldom-read second book is an annotated edition of the 1609 work "Sucesos de las islas Filipinas" by Antonio de Morga. Rizal wrote very long footnotes—sometimes longer than the main text—and printed his erudition in very small type. Reading these notes I had to rethink what I learned about Panday Pira and the pre-colonial metallurgical industry.

In Morga's fourth chapter, for example, on the administration of Gov. Santiago de Vera, there is a reference to a foundry run by an Indio from Pampanga named Panday Pira: "[De Vera] built the stone fortress of Our Lady of the Way, inside the city of Manila on the land side, and for its defense, he had set up a foundry for the making of artillery under the hands of an old Indio called Pandapira, a native of the province of Pampanga. He and his sons served in this line of work until their deaths many years later."

The word *panday* in Java and Borneo means "metalworker" or "ironsmith." How Pandapira became a "cannon-maker" can only be traced to Rizal, elaborated in his annotation to the above text by Morga which reads:

"That is, an indio who already knew how to found cannons even before the arrival of the Spaniards, hence the epithet 'old.' In this difficult branch of metallurgy, as in others, the present-day Filipinos or the new Indio are very much behind the old Indios."

In the next chapter, the fifth, on the administration of Governor General Gomez Perez Dasmariñas, there is another reference by Morga to the foundry: "[Perez Dasmariñas] established a foundry for artillery in Manila where, owing to lack of expert or master founders, few large pieces were made."

Here, Rizal grabs the opportunity to point out, in a footnote, that the indigenous foundry run by Panday Pira disappeared after the Spaniards settled in Manila, conquered from the Indios: "This demonstrates that, when the Indio Pandapira died, there were no Spaniards who knew how to do what he did, nor were his children as skilled as their father."

Today Panday Pira, the cannon-founder, joins the pantheon of heroes and other "great" Filipinos in history who are immortalized in textbooks, despite historical and archeological evidence to the contrary.

W.E. Retana's annotated edition of Morga, published 20 years after Rizal's edition, contains long footnotes on Pandapira supported by 16th-century archival documents from Seville which refute Rizal's assertions that cannon-making had been a flourishing indigenous industry.

The documents from the colonial government in Manila requesting higher authorities in Mexico to send cannon-makers suggest that the Filipinos were unable to forge the thick European-style cannons.

A letter from Governor Vera on June 26, 1597 to the viceroy in Mexico gives an account of his artillery requests:

"I cannot find anyone who knows how to found cannons, because those provided are by Indios who cannot make large cannons. I request your Excellency to send from New Spain founders and officers to manufacture cannons."

"This is to say," Retana continues, "that the natives did not know how to found large cannons. The 26 large pieces alluded to by De Vera could very well come from the Spanish ships or those well made by Robles, the Spanish master founder. If Panday Pira and his sons were indeed such experts at making large cannons, there would be no reason for De Vera's request." Aside from this Spanish cannon-maker, Retana cites an ethnographic article by Ferdinand Blumentritt (whose opinion was held in high esteem by Rizal) which stated that the pre-Hispanic foundry the Spaniards encountered in Manila was run by a Portuguese cannon-maker. Cannon-making was taught to the Tagalogs by a Portuguese and not by a Spaniard? Did Panday Pira learn from either of these two cannon-makers? Blumentritt states further than cannons were brought to the Philippines by Portuguese adventurers and deserters, challenging the opinion of other scholars who maintained that this "indigenous" industry could trace its provenance to Borneo. So Retana delivers the *coup de grâce*:

"...In a word, the art of metallurgy with relation to the founding of cannons, the Filipinos did not retrogress; on the contrary, they gained, thanks to the training given by the Spaniards.

It is not good to rap Rizal on the hand for something he did not know at the time, his work, no doubt, was commendable for its time, but in his zeal to re-create the greatness of the lost pre-Hispanic Philippine civilization, he sometimes drew on imagination more than evidence. This may be the reasons historians gloss over Rizal's historical annotations—he was using scholarship as propaganda; history as a weapon against Spain. Did we have pre-colonial metallurgy? I don't know. Rizal may be less of a historian but that is, I guess, what makes him a hero.

* * *

Comments are welcome at ambeth@admu.edu.ph

New York

HIGH BLOOD

Dulcedehlia S. Almoradie

WE'D also like to know the concerns of the sixtysomething and above, what makes their blood pressure rise or makes them sit back, content that all's well with their world and with themselves. —**Ed.**

"IF you can make it there, you'll make it anywhere....New York, New York." My family has lived in it for 22 years and feel and believe this to be true. It grows on you and you learn to love it and cope with its challenging pace and fast life. By dint of hard work you will get the opportunity, fun and excitement that it is famous for. New Yorkers are known to be rude and unruly, but as you get to know them better you find them to be compassionate, loving and helpful.

Subway stations are full of people rushing to work every morning and coming home in the evening. While waiting for a train, chances are you will be pushed into one by the crowd as everybody tries to get in. You are entertained, though, by singers who perform in some stations for cash. In the trains some rock and roll with their boom-boom boxes for money. Religious fanatics preach, trying to get the attention of people who are reading or sleeping.

Housework awaits people after work and husbands, wives and children help each other with these chores. Americans are independent and children learn it at a very early age and then they get more independent as they grow older. At 18 they usually already live by themselves. They rent apartments that they share with roommates to save money and men and women do so without any embarrassment.

New Yorkers usually have breakfast at their office desks. Quick lunches are taken at cafeterias or fast-food restaurants (or upper scale restaurants which are all around) because companies don't close during lunch time and employees take turns. When the weather is nice you would see a lot of people out in the streets taking a walk or window shopping. Nassau Street in downtown New York is closed to traffic because it gets very crowded. People sit on the steps of big buildings like the New York Public Library, eating or watching people passing by. At night they walk and socialize, especially people in Greenwich Village who are active and out after sundown. They are called the "night people." On Halloween they have a night parade wearing their colorful costumes. Children go "trick or treating" also wearing their costumes.

Americans are health conscious, exercise and eat wisely. They go to gyms that are always busy and crowded. They run, walk or bike even during winter. Scuba diving, skiing, golfing and tennis are some of the sports they love. Smoking is no longer allowed in buildings, restaurants or on any form of public transport so smokers have to go out for a cigarette.

New Yorkers value their weekends and go out to dinner Friday nights, or watch a movie, a concert or a Broadway play afterwards. Malls and department stores are usually full of people, especially teenagers. They also love to travel. Women are not fashion conscious per se and those who are overweight wear whatever suits them.

New Yorkers say "soda" for "soft drink" and "pocketbook" for "handbag," and "To stay or to go" to order food from restaurants. "A dollar twenty" or "a dollar fifty" instead of "one twenty" or "one fifty." Americans are amazed at how Filipinos speak fluent English and we tell them that it is our second language and is taught on the first day of school.

New York never sleeps and shops are open 24 hours on 42nd Street. Theaters, restaurants and movie houses are all around. You can get expensive or inexpensive and imported or local items in stores. Fifth Avenue is the elite shopping area. 42nd Street, downtown and Fourteenth Street are other places for shopping. Oriental items are found in Chinatown. There are outlets like Tangiers or Woodbury Common (a lot of Filipinos go to these shopping areas). You can find all kinds of Mid-Eastern, Caribbean, South American, European, Asian and American food.

New York's famed 42nd Street used to be a depressed area but former Mayor Rudy Giuliani did a good job of making it a better place and closed all the pornographic shops there. Crime is no longer as rampant. He did a wonderful job after the World Trade Center disaster and was well-acclaimed by the whole world for it. It is rumored that he will be asked to run for president in 2008.

There are times when you get mugged or your wallet may get picked in New York like in any other city or place in the world. In Paris, my husband was a victim of a pickpocket. In Milan, gypsy boys surrounded him and took his wallet on our way out of the subway station. In Florence a gypsy carrying a baby in her arms tried to pick his wallet too. It goes to show that these things happen, not only in New York as people think, but anywhere in the world.

New York's worst disaster was the terrorists' attack on the World Trade Center. It will stay in my family's mind forever because my daughter and I almost died that day. New Yorkers showered love and compassion on one another during that unforgettable time of sadness and horror, which goes to show that although evildoers exist, there are also good people who give help, support and love to those who need these, especially during a catastrophe.

During summer people are happy to see the sun which still shines until nine o'clock at night. They go to beaches, have picnics in the parks and stay outdoors to get tanned. The streets to beaches are full of cars moving bumper-to-bumper. Fall comes after summer. Trees and plants lose their leaves and you have to rake bags and bags of them from your lawn. After fall comes winter. Then you need winter clothes, shoes, boots and underwear. The sun shines later in the morning and sets at about three o'clock in the afternoon. Snow is welcome when it comes. Everybody, especially children, enjoy playing in it. They ride snowmobiles and create snowmen, go skiing, snow surfing, etc.

My family needed to make a lot of adjustments when we came to New York. On our first work interviews we were asked for a "New York experience." We all took the first job that we were accepted to and looked for better ones after a year or two because by then we had the needed "New York experience." We had housemaids here in the Philippines and had a hard time adjusting to cooking, washing clothes and cleaning the house after our hard day's work at the office.

That's life in New York. My children, husband and I love living in it. It is the city for fun, love, excitement, opportunity and very hard work. But over and above our love for this big city, my family looks forward to coming home to the Philippines once or twice a year for vacations. We enjoy places like summer resorts and go to provinces that we have not been to when we lived here. If dual citizenship is approved, we will apply for it when it becomes a law. My husband and I are now retired so we can stay for longer vacations. The Philippines is our first home and we love and enjoy it as much as New York and can never forget that it is the land of our birth.

Dulcedehlia S. Almoradie is 66. She worked at The Bank of Nova Scotia, New York and is now retired.

Tragedy of GMA administration

MAY I comment on Conrad de Quiros' column of Oct. 21, 2002.

De Quiros lamented the government's wantonly embracing the path of war even more. He wistfully looked back and said that "we never had this problem during President Fidel Ramos' time when a peace process was in place." Ramos even concluded peace with the Moro National Liberation Front.

Together with that period of peace under Ramos was an economic stride that enabled us to exit from the International Monetary Fund's structural adjustment program and placed the Philippines as the least hit and the most prepared among Asean nations to meet the onslaught of the financial crisis of 1997. Ramos' coalition in Congress, in which his party was a small minority, brought about a tremendous output of reforms, mostly economic, unprecedented in legislative history.

All these were set back by an all-out war during the Estrada presidency, and now, by the hardline posturing of the present administration dictated by President Macapagal-Arroyo's unreflecting and energetic embrace of another war, not our own, and capped by her foolish inspiration and glee at the United States' and European Union's declaration of the New People's Army and Joma Sison as terrorists. The latter is Ms Macapagal's greatest tragedy that put this nation, and her administration as well, in extreme peril and jeopardy.

Ms Macapagal should have pursued with greater vigor than that shown by Ramos in the peace negotiations with the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army-National Democratic Front-Sison, Muslim secessionists and other rebels in our midst. Instead, she humiliated and outraged them. She should have struggled for peace.

—WILSON P. GAMBOA,
2332 C.L. Montelibano Ave.,
Capitol Heights, Bacolod City

Require real value in TV shows

I WOULD like to laud and thank McCann Erickson for demanding true value from noontime shows, which commonly contain demeaning portions (skimpily clad women gyrating to loud music, TV hosts' ad libs filled with sexual innuendo and games that subject contestants to ridicule). I hope the producers of these shows will try to show greater responsibility because their words and actions can have so much effect on their 3 million viewers, especially on the children. As McCann chair Emily Abrera stressed, "The worst assault is the violence these things inflict on our spirit."

I also hope that McCann will continue to demand value from TV sitcoms and advertisements it supports with its ad placements (which sometimes portray women as objects); and from soap operas (which seem to show that it is normal to have immoral relations outside marriage).

—GLECY G. GAMBOA,
39-A 17th Ave., Cubao, QC

Old growth logs still being cut

LAST Sunday evening (Nov. 17, 2002), my wife and I were driving home from Nasugbu, Batangas when we saw around six 16-wheeler trucks parked by the national highway in front of Evercrest (Batulao), each carrying no more than four tree trunks, with each tree trunk no less than 2 feet in diameter, and more than the length of the truck's flatbed. In fact, some of the trunks were so large (definitely more than 3 feet in diameter) that some trucks could carry only one per truck. Based on the length and diameter of the trunks, these were definitely hard and old wood! This is not the first time we have seen these trucks in that area.

We wish to appeal to Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez to have some political will to stop these illegal logging activities. Metro Manila is polluted enough, Baguio is polluted enough, will our countryside suffer the same fate? Let's leave our children a living planet.

—RICARDO B. TAN,
Globe Telecom Plaza,
Pioneer St., Mandaluyong City

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Misunderstood so early

PLEASE allow me to rectify the misconception that was shaped following the publication of Isagani A. Cruz's column titled "A half-hearted salute." (PDI, 11/16/02)

Cruz, in his article, intelligently expressed his opinion on the role of the military in our society, which I truly respect, as I believe it is his right to do so. However, I have to correct the statement that he attributed to me regarding my supposed belief in the selection of the Armed Forces of the Philippines chief of staff. Specifically, he claimed in paragraph 11 that, "Gen. Dionisio Santiago believes that the office of the AFP chief of staff should be filled by one selected by his peers as against the choice to be made by the President."

That's not what I believe in and I could never have said anything that could give him such a wrong impression. On the contrary, I have always believed and have been saying this in various forums that choosing the chief of staff of the AFP is the sole prerogative of the President and commander in chief of the AFP. It is both a constitutional power of the presidency and a revered tradition in the AFP. She may consult and consider recommendations from the AFP leadership, the defense department and other stakeholders of our nation's security. Still, the final choice is her decision and nobody should question that.

As a senior officer of the AFP I have been an advocate of service integrity and loyalty to the chain of command, as I always believe in the vision and sincerity of our commander in chief. Besides, I am a beneficiary of her presidential prerogative.

Cruz could have easily verified my stand on this matter from my statements to media reporters. Or, he could have confirmed it with me before writing it for public reading. Had he done so, he would not have arrived at such a wrong impression.

I do not know who or what led him to such an impression. I can only surmise that this is just another work of those who do not want the government to succeed.

We, in the military service, are committed to do our part—to accomplish our job, to fight the enemies of the state and help attain peace and development in our country. It is our wish that we could give a meaningful contribution in building a strong Philippine Republic.

—LT. GEN. DIONISIO R. SANTIAGO,
vice chief of staff, Armed Forces
of the Philippines

Better ATM services

I AM a senior non-commissioned officer assigned here at Fort Bonifacio, Makati City and among the earliest ones to acquire and use an automatic teller machine (ATM) card issued by the Land Bank of the Philippines, to be used for inquiring and withdrawing funds like my pay and allowances. At first, this was a great convenience as one can withdraw anytime. Lately every time I visit the only ATM outlet located at the Army Finance Office, it is nearly always "off line," particularly during weekends and holidays. It appears that when employees of the bank are on vacation, their ATM machine is also out and on vacation.

If the LandBank's intention is to serve the military and its dependents, I suggest that it should ensure that its ATM outlets are "online," especially during weekends and holidays for its clients. Also, that three more machines be installed strategically within Fort Bonifacio to include places near our Army commissaries, banks on Bayani Road and at the Marine camp located at Gate 3.

—SGT. ARNULFO S. DELA CRUZ (Inf),
Philippine Army,
Fort Bonifacio, Makati City

Upset by inconsistencies

PLEASE allow me to express my impressions on the articles of Rina Jimenez-David.

I suppose she did not regret being born into this world and that her mother chose NOT to use birth control so as to conceive her. I also assume that she does not regret she bore her children as she, in more than one occasion, would fondly refer to them with such motherly affection.

I don't understand then and cannot reconcile why she would staunchly and consistently push for contraception and abortion, which would not have allowed any of the above assumptions possible. Is she fighting for freedom? Or is it freedom from commitments and responsibilities? Is she promoting health care?

Well, is it not that contraception and abortion are far deadlier and detrimental to one's health than pregnancy has been alleged to be?

Is she upholding the right to choose? In the first place, did any of us choose to be born? Shall we ever call it a right to choose the death of a helpless, unborn person?

What inconsistencies! Perhaps it will be more consistent for her to just let the rest of humanity live in peace.

—MIHLGRACE M. SAMONTEZA,
54 Examiner St., West Triangle, QC

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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

UN, Iraq pursue arms inspections

BAGHDAD—UN officials were to hold further talks in Baghdad Tuesday on resuming "no-notice" arms searches after Washington retracted hints that Iraqi fire on its warplanes could spark a war.

Chief UN disarmament envoy Hans Blix was to meet Iraqi Foreign Minister Naji Sabri later Tuesday after reporting "progress" on Monday, when he kicked off the UN mission to hunt for Iraq's suspected weapons of mass destruction.

"We are continuing the talks and tonight we will tell you more," Blix said Tuesday as he left his hotel.

"I think we are making progress," Blix said Monday evening after emerging from nearly two hours of talks with Iraqi officials, including President Saddam Hussein's advisor General Amer al-Saadi.

Blix, who heads the new UN Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (Unscom), is accompanied by International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director Mohamed ElBaradei.

The two arrived from Cyprus with 24 technical experts Monday to pave the way for relaunching the work of inspectors who withdrew four years ago ahead of US-British air strikes over alleged Iraqi obstructions.

They are working under UN Resolution No. 1441, which grants them unprecedented powers to search suspect sites and question Iraqi experts in an effort to end Baghdad's alleged chemical, biological and nuclear weapons programs.

Failure to cooperate this time could trigger a US-led war, a fear raised again by the official press in Baghdad on Tuesday.

Blix spokesperson Ewen Buchanan told reporters "we will not say in advance where the inspections are going to take place.

"Clearly, for the inspections to be credible, they have to be no-notice ... and access (must be) provided on an immediate, unconditional and unrestricted basis" as Resolution 1441 stipulates, he said.

One of the topics discussed during Monday's meeting was the declaration which Iraq must give of its weapons programs by Dec. 8, Buchanan said.

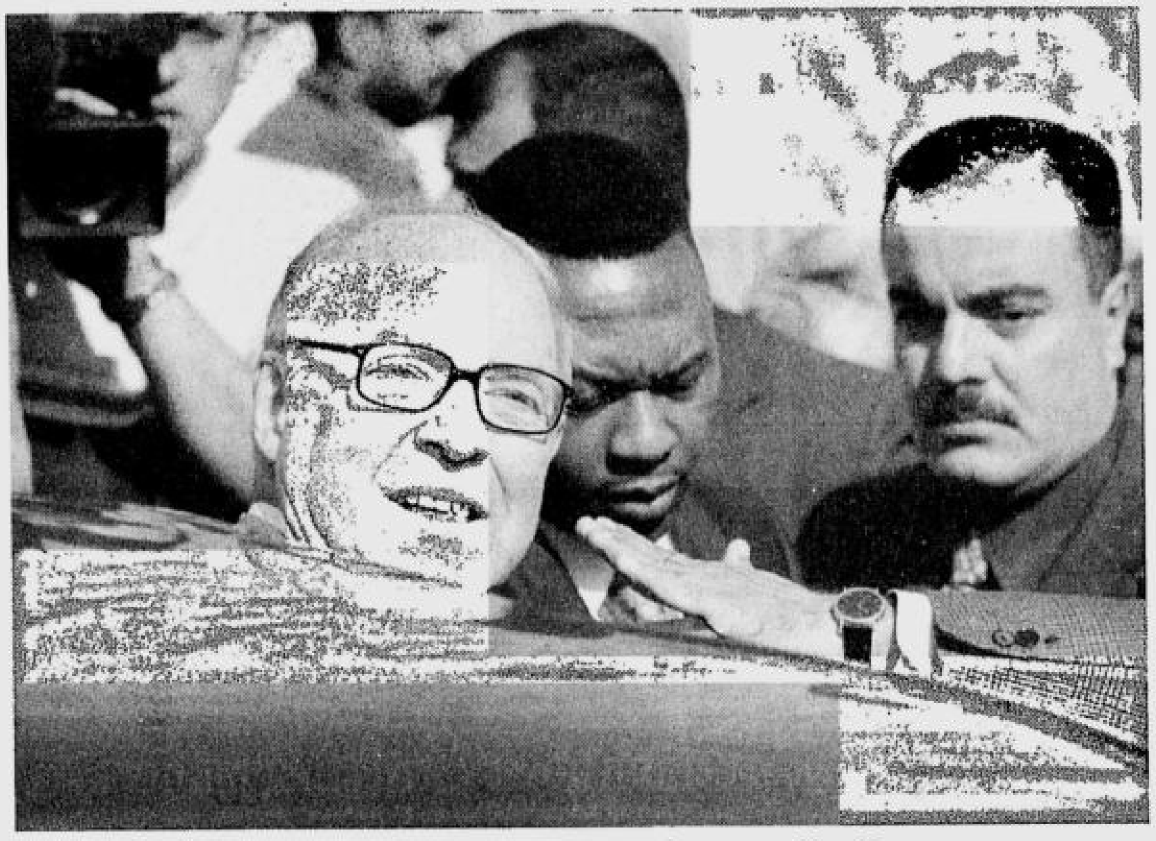
Blix delcared Baghdad had a "new opportunity" to disarm peacefully and avert a US strike, but he played down his potential role in setting matters on a war or peace course.

"We think that the question of war and peace depends mainly on Iraq on the one hand and on the Security Council on the other," he said.

"We will report objectively. It is for the Security Council to assess if there is a breach or not. We hope there will not be a breach," he added.

As Iraq's official press continued to predict that the new inspections would expose US "lies" about its alleged possession of prohibited weapons, a dispute between Baghdad and Washington cast a shadow over the mission.

Iraq accused the United States of seeking to use Resolution 1441 as a cover for "aggression" by claiming that Baghdad's firing on US and British warplanes enforcing "no-fly" zones in the north and south of the country could constitute a "material breach" of the resolution. *AFP*



UN chief arms inspector arrives in Baghdad with his team of experts on Nov. 19. REUTERS

2 more Iraq targets bombed

BAGHDAD—F-16 fighter aircraft operating out of Turkey bombed two anti-aircraft artillery sites near the northern city of Mosul after they fired on coalition aircraft, a US defense official said.

Just hours later, US and British fighters struck two communications centers and a radar installation in southern Iraq after coalition aircraft came under a barrage of surface-to-air missile and anti-aircraft fire, the US military said.

It was the second day in a row that US warplanes had struck Iraqi air defenses after coming under anti-aircraft artillery fire, and the fifth time since the passage of the latest UN Security Council resolution on Nov. 8.

In Baghdad, a military spokesperson said US and British warplanes had bombed "civilian and services installations" in the north before being driven away by Iraqi ground defenses.

An Iraqi air defense spokesperson also said Iraq opened missile and artillery fire on coalition aircraft that staged "69 armed sorties" over southern Iraq on Sunday evening and Monday morning, driving them back to their bases in Kuwait.

US and British aircraft have enforced the no-fly zones since the 1991 Gulf war. Iraq has long denounced and refused to recognize these zones, which are not spelled out in any UN resolution.

Oil prices shot up more than a dollar a barrel on Monday in New York. *AFP*

Mediators see peace deal in Aceh on Dec. 9

BANDA ACEH, Indonesia—Indonesia and separatist rebels in Aceh province are expected to sign a landmark peace pact early next month, international mediators said on Tuesday.

It was hoped the deal, which would include international monitors and a fresh provincial election, would end a decades-long conflict that has claimed thousands of lives.

"We are confident that the government of the Republic of Indonesia and the Free Aceh Movement are very much committed to reach an agreement," Bill Dowell, a spokesperson for the Geneva-based Henry Dunant Center, told reporters.

"A few issues need to be resolved but we are planning for a signing of the peace agreement on Dec. 9, 2002," he added. The center has been mediating in the dispute since 2000.

In Jakarta, chief security minister Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono confirmed the Dec. 9 signing while noting some of the sticking points that remained to be resolved.

"God willing, the peace agreement, which is also the agreement to end hostility, will be signed on Dec. 9 in Geneva," he told reporters.

"The unfinished issue is on how, when and in what way the surrender of arms can be conducted, where will the peace zone be located and how would the police and soldiers adapt to this. All of that should be formulated in one package so there will be a certainty."

Jakarta had wanted to sign the deal before the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan but the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) rebels sought a delay until after that period. Ramadan in Indonesia ends on Dec. 7. *Reuters*

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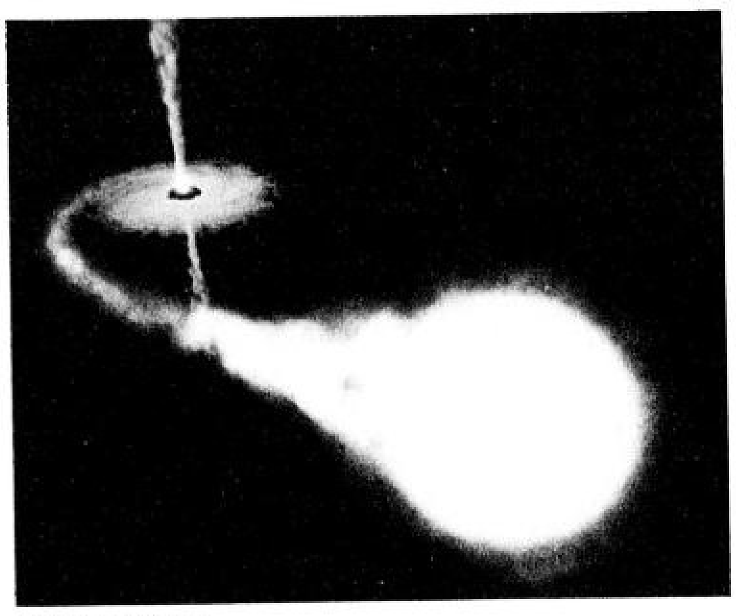


BLACK HOLE

A nearby black hole is shown hurtling like a cannonball through the galaxy in this artist's concept. The runaway black hole is streaking through the Milky Way galaxy, dragging an aging star along as it heads in Earth's general direction, astronomers reported on Nov. 18. REUTERS

Clouds, mist and fog spoil meteor shower in Europe

LONDON—Europeans keen to glimpse the largest meteor shower of the century were disappointed after cloud, mist and fog spoiled a promised spectacular sky show on Tuesday.

Hundreds of meteors were expected to be visible over Europe in the Leonid meteor shower—with peaks of a few hours long expected on Tuesday.

"Unfortunately we were rather clouded over when the peak came," said astronomer Alastair Gunn, who watched the events unfold at the Jodrell Bank observatory.

"It's possible that just about no one saw it—the cloud and fog was that dense," said Tony Conlan, a weather forecaster. "You would have had to have been 525 meters up a mountain to get a clear view of the meteor shower."

A reporter for Hesse state radio in Germany was sent to the highest peak in the state, the 855-meter Wasserkuppe, to get a look, but the fog hindered any sightings.

"You can't see your hand before the eyes," Beate Klenke, the reporter, said.

Some stargazers drove home disappointed after being out in the rain and cold, she said.

In Frankfurt, Germany, no stars were visible, and one radio station reported visibility of only 45 meters.

"Sorry folks, you'll see no shooting stars this morning," said one German disc jockey. The skies were also overcast in Paris.

The meteors are dust particles shed by Comet Tempel-Tuttle, which swings around the sun once every 33 years. The shower occurs each November, when the Earth's orbit takes it through the trail left by the comet.

The annual meteor shower usually delivers only a few visible meteors. But hundreds per hour were supposed to be visible as they burn up in the atmosphere this time, scientists had said.

The shower was predicted to have two peaks, each a few hours long. The first peak was expected over Europe and Africa. For instance, in Britain, the show was expected between 3 a.m. and 5 a.m. Tuesday, with the peak in the middle.

The shower's second peak, most prominent in North American skies, was expected at around 5:30 a.m. Tuesday. Even though the brightness of a full moon could wash out the dimmest meteors, viewers in good locations will be able to see a few meteors or more every minute.

At Nasa's Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, Alabama, an all-night "Leonids Live" show was being broadcast on the Internet. Eight scientists discussed questions, including whether meteorites make any sounds before they burn and crash.

"They do," said Nasa spokesperson Steve Roy, who was at the center. "We're covering the whole gamut of science related to meteorites, including a live report from Antarctica, where they've been collecting meteorites on the surface of the ice. We're having fun."

Astronomers predicted that the next occurrence of a Leonid storm even close to this magnitude will be in 2099. *AP*

WORLDBRIEFS

New terror threat

CANBERRA—The federal government warned Tuesday that a "credible" terrorism threat linked to Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network has been made against Australia. The message was similar to threats received in recent days by the United States and Britain, Justice Minister Chris Ellison said. "The Australian government has received credible information as to a possible terrorist threat in Australia over the next couple of months," Ellison told reporters. "The information, whilst general and not specific as to target and timing is nonetheless credible." *AP*

Seoul dissatisfied

SEOUL—South Korea was unhappy that Pyongyang had clarified a verbal blunder on nuclear weapons but failed to respond to international pressure to dismantle its nuclear arms programme, officials said Tuesday. A day after the Stalinist state clarified an apparent admission that it possessed atomic weapons, the Unification Ministry said the North had to act soon on the nuclear issue. "Nobody is very happy about this so-called clarification," said ministry spokesperson Kim Jong-Ro. "What we want is for North Korea to act to address concerns about their nuclear weapons programme." *AFP*

Oil tanker leaks

MADRID—A leaking oil tanker soiling the coastline of Spain's northwestern region of Galicia has split in two, officials said on Tuesday, a development environmentalists had warned could lead to an ecological disaster. "The ship split in two at 8 o'clock this morning (0700 GMT)," a spokesperson for the regional government in Galicia told Reuters by telephone. The Bahamian-flagged tanker Prestige, carrying 70,000 tonnes of fuel oil, ran into trouble off the northwest coast of Spain during a violent storm last Wednesday and has spilled some 5,000 tons of fuel oil near one of Spain's richest fisheries. *Reuters*

Maoists kill 14

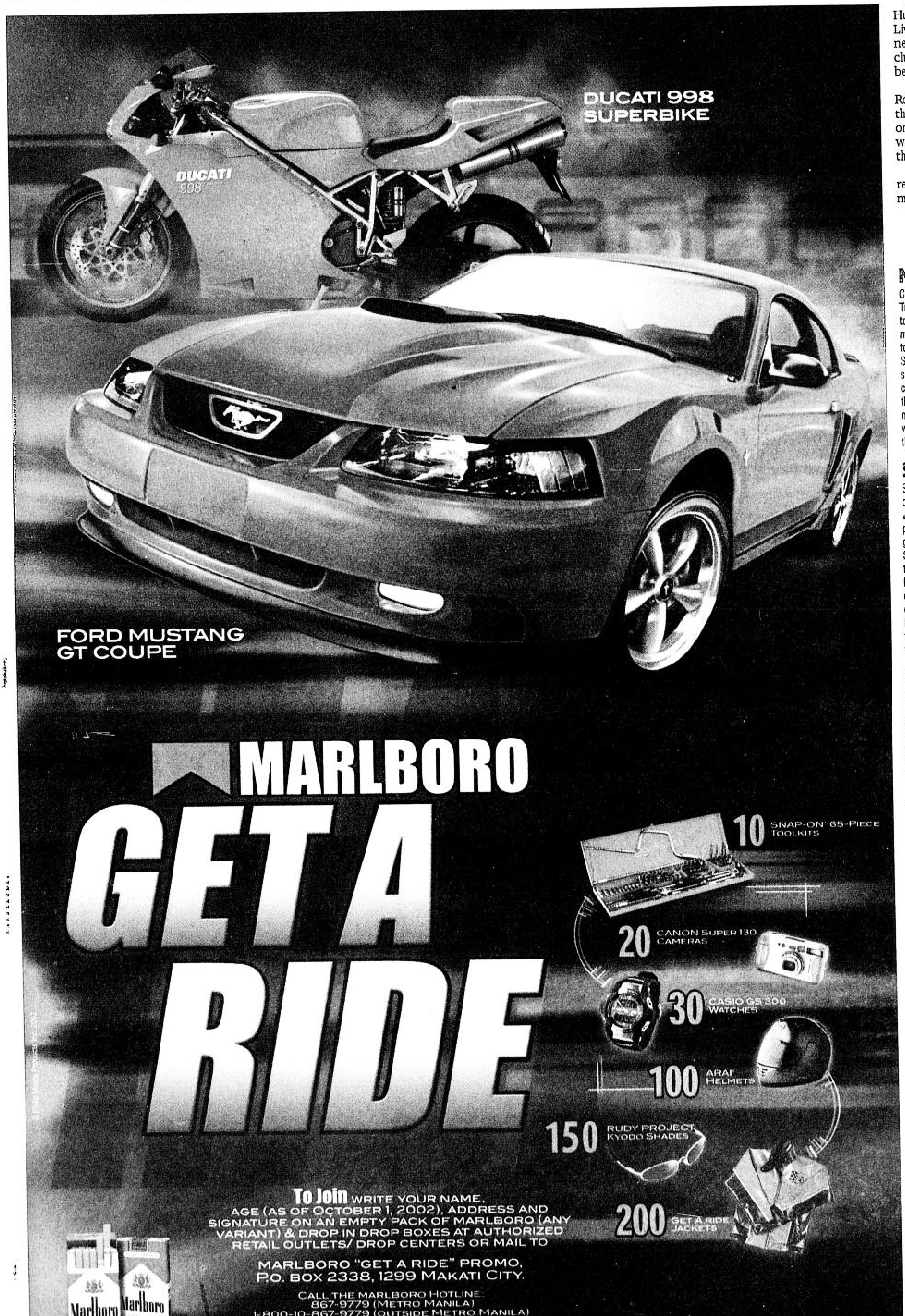
HYDERABAD, India—Fourteen people, mostly tribals, were killed when Maoist rebels blew up a bus in the southern Indian state of Andhra Pradesh overnight and then escaped into nearby forests, police said Tuesday. Guerrillas of the outlawed People's War Group (PWG) used a remote control device to blow up the bus late Monday in the village of Chintagattu, some 260 km from Hyderabad, provincial capital of Andhra Pradesh. Police said the rebels had placed a landmine under a culvert in the road and had then apparently fled across the border into the heavily forested neighboring state of Chattisgarh. *AFP*

News from Uday

BAGHDAD—Iraq's tightly controlled state press has found room for two outlets, albeit run by President Saddam Hussein's elder son, which provide Iraqis with news they don't get from other local media. While other Iraqi newspapers glorify Saddam, Babel, a daily tabloid run by his influential son Uday, regularly publishes controversial and often hostile news about Iraq over several pages carrying dispatches by international news agencies. Uday's Youth TV, meanwhile, airs reports by other Arab satellite channels, chiefly Qatar's Al-Jazeera, that give a different view to what Iraqis are normally told by their state-run television. *AFP*

Hostage crisis

HOSPITALET DE LLOBREGAT, Spain—A teenager with a knife took his younger sister and 19 other children hostage Monday at his former school and held them for hours until a plainclothesman overpowered him while delivering a pizza, officials said. None of the students were hurt in the three-and-a-half-hour ordeal at the Casal de l'Angel school in this gritty industrial town just south of Barcelona. Interior Minister Angel Acebes, speaking in the central city of Guadalajara, confirmed the arrest and said the hostage-taker was a former pupil of the school who was expelled last year. *AP*



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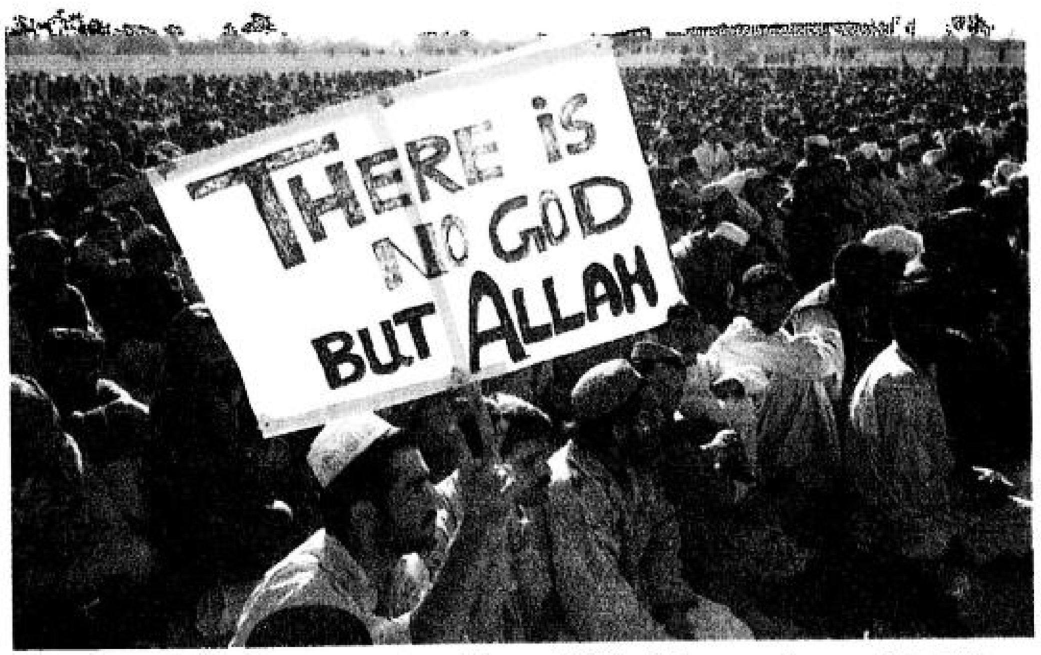

TO America, Aimal Kasi was a murderer. To many Pakistanis, however, he was a hero and martyr. AFP

Thousands lay to rest killer of 2 CIA workers

QUETTA, Pakistan—Thousands of people packed a soccer stadium on Tuesday for the funeral of Aimal Kasi, a Pakistani man executed last week for the 1993 murders of two CIA employees. Heavily armed police were on hand to ensure peace, but fears of an anti-American backlash did not materialize.

As Kasi's body, draped in green cloth and sprinkled with flower petals, made its way into the stadium, an Islamic cleric began reciting verses from the Quran, the Muslim holy book. About 20,000 people were on hand, and hundreds more were arriving by the minute.

Many pushed forward to catch a glimpse of Kasi's face. Black flags fluttered atop the stadium, and loudspeakers crackled with the sounds of the cleric's sermon.

"Aimal Kasi was martyred by the imperialist America," said the cleric, Hussain Ahmed Sherodi. "Aimal Kasi's martyrdom has united Muslims against the United States."

Several placards were held aloft, one saying "Down with the USA," and another reading "Shame, Shame, Bush!" a reference to US President George W. Bush. Security was tight, but there was no violence and the crowd was somber during the funeral prayers.

Kasi's family had appealed for peace, and the chief of the Kasi tribe thanked mourners for respecting their wishes.

"We are thankful to the people for their cooperation with us and that all rites were performed in peace," Arbab Zahir Kasi said.

After the prayers, thousands accompanied Kasi's body on the 3-km walk to the Kasi family's ancestral graveyard just outside of town.

Kasi was buried close to his father's grave at the old cemetery, his tearful family members looking on as the body was lowered into the ground. Afterward, the fresh grave was sprinkled with flower petals and water, in keeping with local tradition.

Lawmakers in the capital interrupted a parliamentary session to say a prayer for Kasi, regarded as a martyr and a hero by many here.

"May his soul be blessed and his family have patience," said Hafiz Hussain Ahmed, a lawmaker from a hardline Islamic bloc that came in third in Oct. 10 elections. "May those who handed him over (to the Americans) be destroyed."

Kasi was executed by lethal injection in Virginia on Nov. 14 for the 1993 murders of two CIA employees—communications worker Frank Darling, 28, and CIA analyst and physician Lansing Bennett, 66—as they sat in their cars at a stoplight. His body arrived in his hometown of Quetta on Monday and was brought to the family home, where relatives and supporters were in mourning. *AP*

intel inside pentium 4

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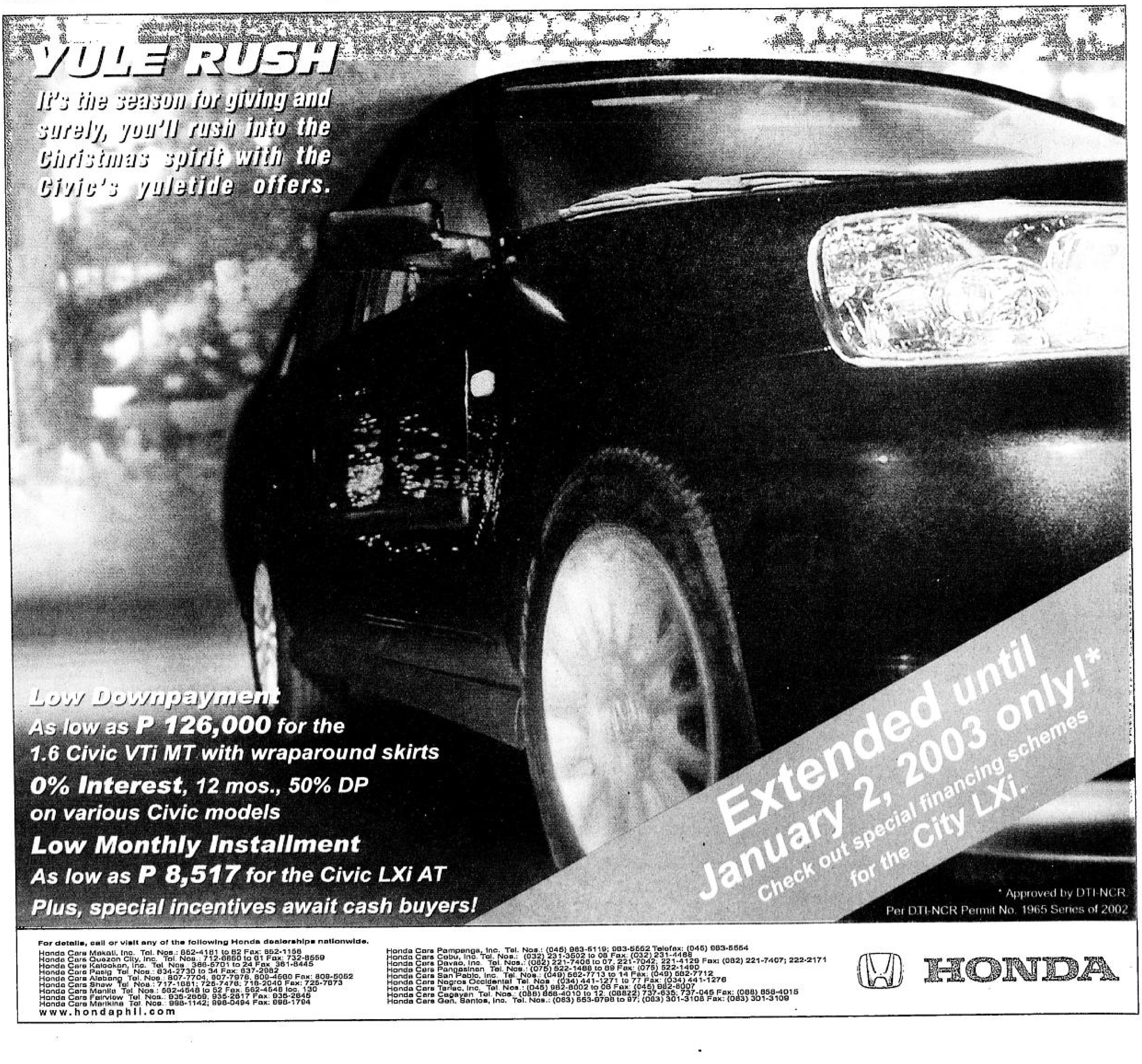
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2 ex-PMAers convicted in fatal hazing

RTC judge sentences 2 former cadets to 6 to 12 years in jail for homicide

By Vincent Cabreza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—The first documented testimonies of "beating, whipping and punching of plebes" at the Philippine Military Academy resulted on Monday in the conviction of two former upper class cadets for the fatal hazing of Cadet Fourth Class Edward Domingo last year.

Judge Ruben Ayson of the regional trial court here based his ruling on testimonies of active military servicemen and PMA cadets who acknowledged the existence of hazing in the premier military institution.

But Ayson scaled down the crime against Cadets Third Class John Louie Ong and Michael Perang from murder to homicide.

Ong and Perang, who have been detained at the Baguio City jail since Domingo's death on March 10, 2001, were sentenced from six to 12 years in minimum detention.

Domingo, 23, succumbed to a heavy blow that occurred when he underwent the "yearling tradition" of beatings that followed a successful academic performance. The cadet was a classmate of Perang and Ong until he was turned back for a year for failing grades.

Domingo was up for promotion to cadet third class, necessitating the traditional beatings, Ayson noted.

Ayson sat through a virtual crash course on the PMA's underground hazing traditions during this first civil trial involving military hazing.

His 18-page ruling described the underground nature of hazing, which is officially prohibited by PMA officials but which is practiced by cadets.

"Upperclassmen take the risk. They call (hazing) 'taking life.' Meaning to say, they do it anyway. If they don't get caught, it is okay. But if they are caught, then that is life. That is the risk they take," Ayson noted.

He said Domingo apparently acceded to the "yearling tradition" of *kabog* (punching) and *hataw* (whipping), which were imposed by his former classmates.

"The yearling tradition is voluntary on the part of the cadet, who wished to undergo it. The only problem is that those who resist or refuse to undergo it are ostracized as . . . cowards," Ayson pointed out.

Hataw requires the upperclassmen to whip the cadet eight times, "as he shouts the letters of the word 'yearling,'" said Ayson.

Kabog requires the cadet to endure eight punches in the stomach, representing the same letters.

The defendants said Domingo crumpled when he was about to receive the *kabog* blows. The blows, which were meant for the stomach, connected with his chest, the cadets claimed.

Domingo died from these chest blows, in the presence of Ong, Perang and Cadets Fourth Class Jerry Catbagan and Al Victor Burkley, who were awaiting their turn.

At Fort del Pilar, Brig. Gen. Edilberto Adan, PMA superintendent, had declared the ruling as a "victory" for the academy's policy against maltreatment, said Maj. Edgard Arevalo, PMA spokesperson.

Adan said he would explain the ruling and its implications to the PMA cadet corps to reinforce a covenant that devolved to the senior cadets the authority to instill discipline on lower class cadets.

The covenant is part of a new sociological scheme that removes cadets from an environment of excessive regimentation that is instituted by military tactical officers.

"(Adan) wants to send the signal to our cadets that (hazing) is not accepted here... Cadets always feel that (staying in this institution) means they live in an isolated world. That shouldn't be the case. The cadets are more strictly bound by laws than the average civilian," Arevalo said.

THE NEWLY hatched eaglet needs godparents for its survival.
COURTESY OF THE PHILIPPINE EAGLE FOUNDATION

New eaglet bred in captivity needs godparents

By Joselle R. Badilla
PDI Mindanao Bureau

DAVAO CITY—Here's good news for conservationists and the country's future generation.

The 10th Philippine Eagle (*Pithecophaga jefferyi*) bred in captivity was hatched at the Philippine Eagle Center in Malagos, Baguio District here on Sunday afternoon. The eaglet needs godparents, who would take care of expenses, for its survival.

The still unnamed eaglet, which weighed 127 grams, broke out of its shell short of the normal incubation period of 56 days.

It was laid on Sept. 23 from the natural pairing of male eagle Jag and female eagle Ka Brianne.

Jag and Ka Brianne were the same eagles, which conceived Pangarap, Kapayapaan, Bayani and Ellen Therese.

Officials of the Philippine Eagle Foundation (PEF) said the new eaglet would be spending Christmas in the incubation room while waiting for godparents.

Dennis Salvador, PEF executive director, said Ka Brianne laid another egg on Nov. 9 after she was "double-clutched."

Double clutching is a technique where an egg is taken away from the female eagle in order for her to lay another one. An eagle lays an egg once every two years but through double clutching, Salvador said they hope they could progressively increase eaglet production.

Salvador said they found out on Sunday that the other egg is fertile and would hatch in January next year.

As this developed, Salvador said the center is expecting another eaglet this week. Another eagle, Kahayag, which was impregnated using cooperative artificial insemination techniques, laid the egg.

The center had its first eagle conceived, hatched and bred in captivity in Jan. 15, 1992. She was named Pag-asa.

The PEF has been trying to breed eagles in captivity to increase the bird's population.

Since 1992, it successfully hatched 11 eaglets but only ten survived, including the still unnamed eaglet.

The foundation depends heavily on donations for its project. This includes breeding, education and campaign to save the endangered species, the country's national symbol.

Today, there are only 500 pairs of eagles remaining in the wild.

The Philippine Eagle, the world's largest bird of prey, larger than the American Bald Eagle, was declared an endangered species in 1965.

In July 1995, President Ramos declared the Philippine Eagle the national bird.

Group wants refund from Lopez power firm

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—Boosted by last week's Supreme Court ruling ordering the Manila Electric Co., a consumers group here also want another Lopez-owned power firm to refund its consumers for excess charges.

Lawyer Romeo Gerochi, convenor of the People Opposed to Warrantless Electricity Rates (Power of Iloilo), said the Panay Electric Co.(Peco) should refund its consumers amounting from P11 million to P100 million for charging unauthorized expenses through its generation charges since 1989.

"The Supreme Court ruling on Meralco is applicable to Peco and this reinforces our cases against Peco," said Gerochi in a phone interview with the INQUIRER.

Jeffrey Celiz, chair of the militant Bagong Alyansang Makabayan and Power convenor, said the ruling was a "partial but significant victory of consumers under the mercy of monopoly firms like Meralco and Peco."

He said the ruling should challenge legislators and local government officials to take the lead in prosecuting abusive firms.

Carlos Borja, Peco public relations officer, said the company would not comment on the issue pending the resolution of cases involving Peco.

The landmark ruling ordered the country's biggest power distributor to implement the refund for collecting excess charges because it included unauthorized expenses like income taxes in its operational expenses.

Gerochi accused Peco of overcharging its consumers by jacking up its generation cost and including expenses not related to the generation of electricity.

The Peco is the sole electricity distributor of Iloilo City's 180 barangays. The company is supplied by the Lopez-owned Panay Power Corporation (PPC).

Under an agreement forged in 1997, the PPC acquired a 30 percent stake in Peco, controlled by the Cacho family, in exchange for the same shares in the PPC.

According to records submitted by the Peco to the ERC, Gerochi said the company includes employee benefits, contributions to the Social Security System and Philippine Health Insurance Corporation, among others, in the computation of the generation charge.

He said he will file a motion before the Energy Regulatory Commission to resolved pending petitions directing Peco to refund its more than 40,000 consumers.

The cases were filed before the then Energy Regulatory Board (ERB) in 1990. On Feb. 4, 1999, the ERB ordered the Peco to refund its consumers P841,381.20 for overcharges.

The ERB order said some of the expenses should be excluded from the generation charge collected by Peco from its consumers because these were "not directly related to the production or distribution of power and do not redound to the benefit of consumers."

The expenses include advertising, public donation, representation and profit sharing.

Both Peco and Gerochi filed motions for reconsideration on the order that remains pending until now.

Gerochi believed that the refund should have been higher. The Peco maintained that the order was unfair because its computation in the generation charge was valid.

Gerochi also accused Peco of passing on to consumers the electric consumption of the residences of top company officials.

In a four-page order dated Sept. 26, the ERC described as "improper" Peco's practice of allowing residential electric consumption of some of its executives to be charged as part of company use, which based on Peco's records "far exceeded the electric consumption of its main office" in 2000.

The ERC ordered Peco to submit data covering 1996 to 2002 on the actual electric consumption from 1996 to 2002, generated and purchased electricity for the same period and the total consumption of its executives, officers and employees.

Overloaded jeep plunges into river, six killed

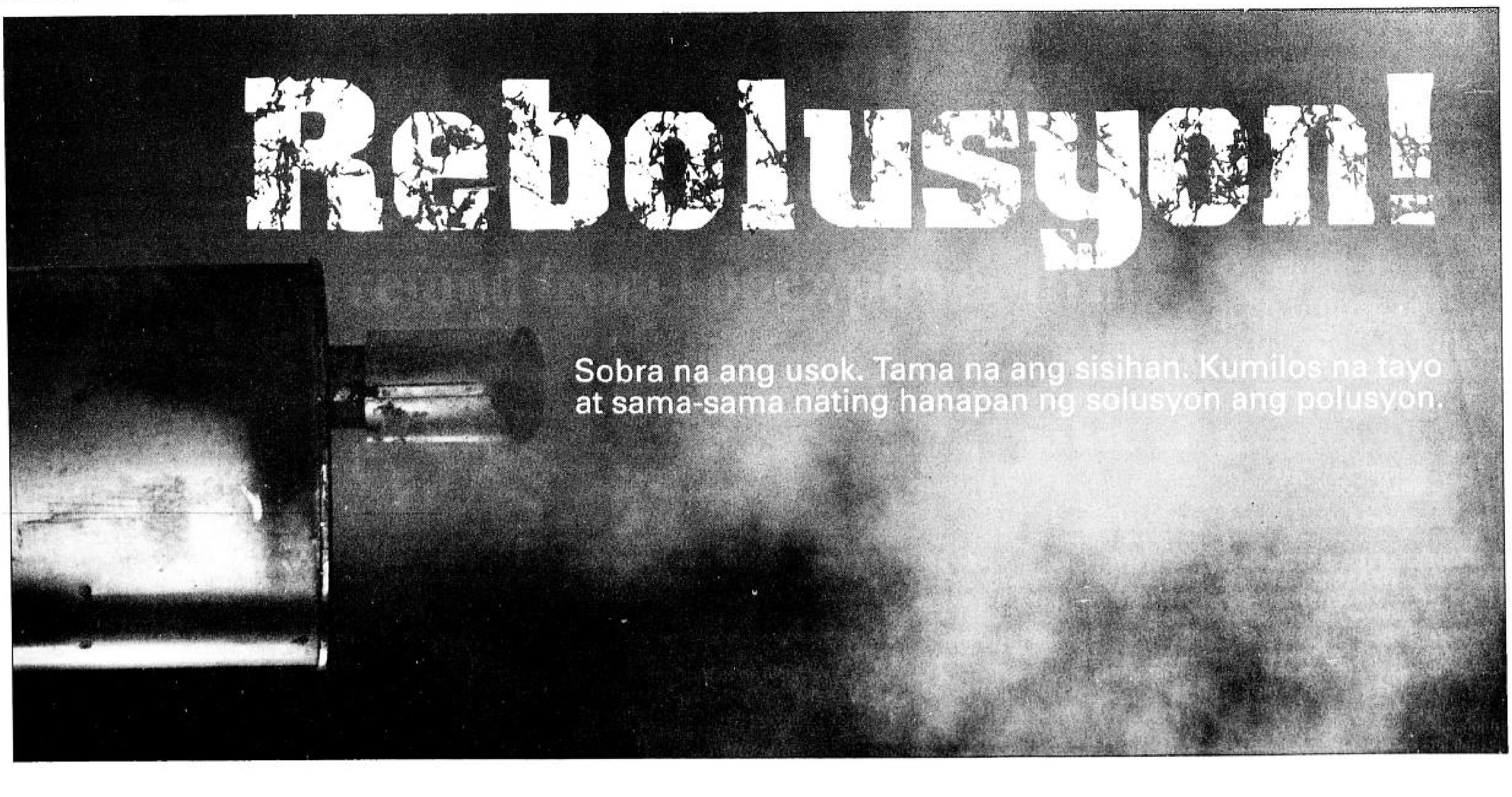
AN OVERLOADED jeepney carrying 40 persons lost its brakes and plunged into a river in Zamboanga del Sur, pinning five passengers to death, police said Tuesday.

One of several passengers injured in Sunday's accident in Molave, a remote town in mountainous Zamboanga del Sur, later died in a hospital, said senior police superintendent Pedrito Reyes.

The jeep was carrying double its passenger capacity, with some people sitting on the roof, when its brake system failed as it negotiated a downhill road. The vehicle fell into the shallow river and overturned, Reyes said.

Molave is about 760 kilometers south of Manila.

Public transport in the rural areas is prone to accidents because of old, poorly maintained jeeps and buses and dangerously narrow roads often lacking safety signs and guardrails. *AFP*


Rebolusyon!
Sobra na ang usok. Tama na ang sisihan. Kumilos na tayo at sama-sama nating hanapan ng solusyon ang polusyon.

Armed men kill police-kidnapper in Batangas

By Mei Magsino
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

TANAUAN CITY—Out of desperation, he forgot he is a cop and kidnapped two sons of the woman who owed him money. But the cop-turned-kidnapper is now dead from the bullets of hired killers.

SPO3 Avelino Manalo, 48, a police assigned at the Western Police District and who resides in Barangay Pantay Bata, this city was killed at 8 p.m., Monday, when armed men wearing bonnets sprayed bullets at him.

After the killing, the still unidentified suspects armed with M16 rifles fled aboard their Honda Civic car with no plate number.

Another victim, Aldrin Solis, 16, a mechanic who was walking near the crime scene, was hit by a stray bullet and was rushed to the C. P. Reyes Hospital in the city.

When the Tanauan police started their investigation, city police chief Supt. Francisco Gutierrez received a text message from an informant, saying there were two hostages in Manalo's rest house in Barangay Pantay Matanda.

"When our police got there, the two kidnap victims were there, still in handcuffs," Batangas police director Sr. Supt. Rodolfo Magtibay said.

Rescued were Ronnie Jude Velasco, 18, from Barangay Dos of nearby Sto. Tomas town, and his younger brother, Mark Stephen, 16, a high school student.

Investigation revealed that Ronnie Jude was kidnapped by Manalo and SPO3 Jesus Mendoza of the Sto. Tomas police at 9 a.m., Nov. 14, while the victim was manning the family store.

He was then taken to Manalo's rest house in Barangay Pantay Bata.

As if one kidnapping was not enough, Velasco's younger brother, Mark Stephen, was also kidnapped by Manalo, Mendoza and SPO2 Roger Paneda, also from the Tanauan police; Marilou Nabaja, 45, a businesswoman from Barangay 3, Sto. Tomas town; and Severino Manalo alias Vino, 61, a farmer from Pantay Bata, this city.

Mark was brought to Calamba City in Laguna, and then to Manalo's rest house.

"Our investigation revealed that the two boys were kidnapped to force their mother, Judith Velasco, to pay SPO3 Manalo the P700,000 she owes him," Southern Tagalog police director Chief Supt. Enrique Galang Jr. said, "When we were investigating this case, we discovered that this was beyond just a kidnapping and murder case. But still, we could not connect the murder to the kidnapping. While the two boys were kidnapped, the mother didn't even tell the police that her sons were missing."

Judith Velasco, who also left a trail of numerous estafa charges, goes with the aliases Maria Rosario, Cherry Parcon, Christine Hilado and Dr. Teresita Angeles, Galang said.

Investigation also revealed that Velasco was Mendoza's lover.

"We're theorizing that Velasco also owed Mendoza some money and she wouldn't pay up, that's why he joined Manalo in kidnapping the two boys," Galang added, "What's really embarrassing here is that police officers did this. Maybe they really needed their hard-earned money. But Velasco wouldn't pay up."

Singing of national anthem in Cebuano stopped

ILIGAN CITY—The Sangguniang Panlungsod here have passed a resolution nullifying the mandatory singing of the Cebuano version of the Lupang Hinirang during sessions.

The new resolution came about after a councilor said they were violating the law.

Councilor Alfredo Busico said under Republic Act 8491 or the National Flag Law, the singing of the "Mutyang Pinangga," Iligan's own version of the national anthem, was illegal.

Busico even distributed copies of the law to prove his point.

"The real thing is, apart from describing the proper ways of handling the Philippine flag, (RA 8491) also provides rules on how the Philippine national anthem should be sung, and that includes the singing of only the official Filipino version," he said.

Violating the law means a fine ranging from P5,000 to P20,000 or imprisonment of not more than one year.

The councilors, after reading their copies of RA 8491 admitted they have unwittingly violated the law.

But Councilor Jerry Espina reasoned out that there was a city ordinance passed in 1989 that mandates the singing of "Mutyang Pinangga" every session.

"Mutyang Pinangga" was a translation from Lupang Hinirang by the now defunct cultural group Lubas Dagang Bisaya.

The INQUIRER learned that Iligan was not the only city, which has its version of the national anthem.

In Marawi City, Lupang Hinirang is being sung in Maranao. *Jeffrey P. Maningo, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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INQUIRER Northern Luzon
Editor Jun Bandayrel ◆ Bureau Chief Rolando B. Fernandez

School becomes Igorot culture center

By Maurice Malanes
Baguio City

STUDENTS at St. Martin School perform a traditional Igorot dance during the inauguration of the Catholic school building. E.V. ESPIRITU

BISHOP Carlito Cenzon of the Baguio-Benguet vicariate did not only bless a new Catholic school building at Crystal Cave in Baguio City on Nov. 9 with holy water. An Ifugao elder also scooped blood from a butchered pig and sprinkled it at the cornerstone of the building.

As with the holy water, the poured blood from the sacrificial animal was also meant to bless the building and protect it from evil spirits.

Pedro Buyagew, 60, the Ifugao elder, earlier opened a jar of wine, poured a drop of it, and prayed to *Kabunian* (Igorot term for God), seeking blessings and good fortune for the Assumpta Center, the name of the new four-story building for St. Martin School.

Thirty-nine years in the making, the new building for St. Martin School, which the Religious of Assumption sisters run, was inaugurated last Nov. 9 through a mix of Igorot prayers and chants and Catholic worship rites.

The school's faculty members, most of them from the Cordillera, led in singing hymns and psalms in the Igorot dialect, some of which were sung to the tune of an *uggayam* or Kalinga chant and other Igorot religious chants.

Shortly before Bishop Cenzon said his homily, Buyagew took to the stage and announced the "good signs" he "read" from the bile and liver of the butchered pig.

Holding up the liver for all the 200 parents, school children and guests to see, the elder showed how the bile was hidden from the liver.

"This is a good sign," said the g-stringed elder, whose six children were among the alumni of the school. "That the bile is hidden inside the liver means our children will be protected from danger—from kidnapping to terrorism."

Bishop Cenzon affirmed the elder's assurance. "So have no fear," he said. "We have the blessings of our elder and all signs are auspicious. (It is thus) a challenge for this institution (St. Martin School) and for us to use these signs for the common good."

Then the bishop prayed for wisdom for the Religious of Assumption sisters. "May you have the wisdom of true educators who can integrate life with the goals and values of the local culture," he said.

Noting how mainstream Philippine education has produced "very selfish Filipinos," Bishop Cenzon prayed that St. Martin School, as it integrates local culture into its curriculum, would produce citizens oriented to help others.

The bishop said that service to others, community spirit, cooperation and volunteerism are values inherent in indigenous culture which are getting lost as the country's educational system continues to produce "more and more selfish Filipinos" and *pilosopos* (street "philosophers" who don't make sense).

He thus exhorted St. Martin's educators to be keen about all the positive values from the local culture and integrate these with the Christian tenets of love, service, peace, and justice.

No more pagan

St. Martin School has revolutionized its curriculum since the 1970s, turning upside down the early Caucasian missionaries' approach of supplanting the local culture with Christianity.

"We (Religious of the Assumption or RA sisters) came to see that the various cultural values of the people of the Cordillera were also Christian, but were expressed in tribal or indigenous ways," Sister Mary Francis Talampas, former RA superior, told the INQUIRER.

It finally dawned on the RA sisters that their mission was "helping people find God in their own culture," said Talampas. This realization, she said, was in direct contrast to the notion of earlier missionaries who considered anything tribal or indigenous to be "pagan," which the earlier missionaries tried to supplant with Christianity, if not Catholicism.

The RA sisters have translated their new realization into the school's curricula, under which Igorot dances, music, folklore, religious rites and cultural values are integrated with Department of Education-prescribed subjects.

Since the 1970s, St. Martin has experimented on making the liturgical mass more meaningful by incorporating Igorot dances and music, said Talampas.

During the inauguration of the Assumpta Center, the pupils of St. Martin amused guests and donors of the new building with Benguet, Bontok, Kalinga, Ifugao, and Tinggian dances to the rhythm and beat of gongs and drums.

Wearing g-strings and traditional vests (for the boys) and traditional *tapis* (wrap around) skirts and blouses (for the girls), the pupils danced with pride and confidence like the pros in the villages.

Igorot dances are taught to children during their physical education subjects. Igorot cultural values are also taught *sibika* or social studies.

For their practical arts, the pupils learn how to cook *pinikpikan* (an Igorot chicken dish) and other menus, and make handicrafts out of local materials such as potholders from pine needles and brooms from tiger grass.

Beyond the classroom

Children's education at St. Martin School also goes beyond the classroom. Each year, Grades IV to VI pupils go for "exposure and immersion trips" to Igorot communities to enable them to experience first-hand lessons on environmental protection and management, said Talampas.

She cited how some pupils went to Hapao, Ifugao, to learn about the community's *muyong*, an Ifugao forest management system. In Hapao, the pupils also interacted with public school pupils there, teaching each other about traditional dances, music and folklore.

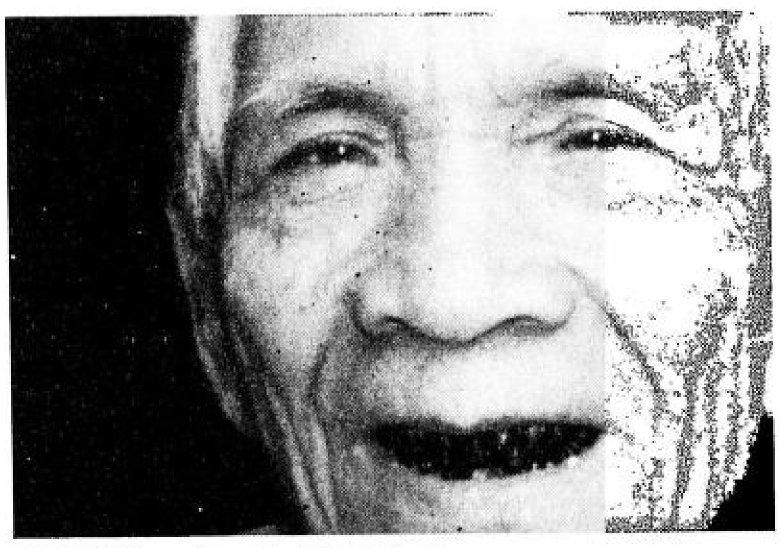
The pupils don't only learn about current events through their teachers, they also get to visit flashpoints of local issues such as the San Roque Dam in the Benguet-Pangasinan border, the open-pit mine sites in Itogon, Benguet, and others.

These exposure and immersion trips seek to enable the pupils to be "rooted in current realities," said Talampas.

Formerly a school primarily for indigent Igorot children, St. Martin School has begun to collect tuition since 1994. It has also opened its doors to children of non-Cordillera parents.

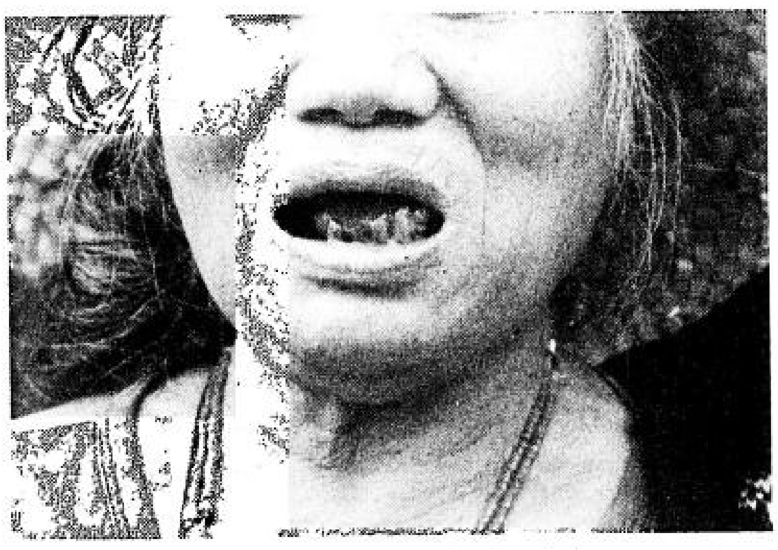
But the school (enrollees: almost 200) has maintained its distinct curriculum, which now incorporates not only indigenous Cordillera culture but lowland traditional culture as well.

Since 1997, the country's Catholic community has designated St. Martin School as a Center for Inculturation where pupils, students and faculty members from schools in Manila and abroad come to learn about Northern Philippine culture.



LAKAY Wika smiles with his black teeth.

APONG Bacari describes her solid black teeth as 'black as a roof'. She started to stain her teeth at an early age and was further stained due to constant betel-chewing until this day.



APO Bining shows her red and black stained teeth from constant betel chewing.

PHOTOS BY IKIN SALVADOR

BURNED guava sap is the source of black ink used for staining.

When black teeth are beautiful

By Ikin Salvador
Contributor

DESPITE the popularity of tooth whitening products, some old folk in southern Kalinga have kept their teeth literally black until this day.

Tubug, the practice of blackening or staining teeth with black ink made from guava sap and plant dyes, is alive among villagers in Kalinga.

This practice goes back to the pre-Spanish period, where indigenous people blackened their teeth to differentiate themselves from animals, whose teeth were white. Humans were distinguished by "cosmetic refinements" like filed and stained teeth.

Tubug was once a widespread practice in the Cordillera and in Southeast Asia. However, remnants of this tradition can only be seen in isolated and remote areas in Kalinga. It is an irreversible and permanent form of aesthetics that complements the people's concept of *napia* (beauty), complete with body tattoos and adornments.

Tooth staining

In early times, tooth staining was performed by a *mantutubog* (an indigenous dentist) practically on every child and adult in the community.

A guava branch was burned and placed in an *araro* (metal shaft) and the black sap was scraped off and polished on the teeth. It was a form of dental cleaning and prevention from tooth decay.

Lakay Wika, who is in his 70s, says he never had bad breath due to staining. He is proud to have a strong and complete set of teeth despite his age. This makes him stand out among his peers.

The older Kalingas also believe in the *tutuk* (tooth worm) that slowly eats up the teeth, causing toothache and decay. To prevent such, *tubug* is performed. This is their version of constant brushing that can easily be learned by any member of the group. It is also useful in easing tooth pain, they claim.

Tubug is enhanced by constant betel nut chewing practiced by Kalingas from childhood to old age. The substances (lime, betel nut and leaves) used in betel nut chewing are "cemented" on the enamel of the teeth, making them black and red.

Apong Bacari describes her black teeth "*kasla nagisit nga atip* (as black as roof)."

Stylish

Although considered as stylish and beautiful for the older generation, the young Kalingas view *tubug* as ugly.

In one afternoon session of betel nut chewing in the village, we saw Takraw, in her late 50s, cleaning her teeth with "Scotch Brite" or aluminum fiber used for dishwashing. She told us that her children did not like her black teeth and she was ashamed to show these to other people.

In one instance, young Kalingas asked their elders to have their black teeth removed and replaced with white false teeth.

Apong Ammai and Lakay Wika tried but failed to "clean" their black teeth by scraping them off with a knife and *darat* (fine sand). They believe that having black teeth is a "gift" from their ancestors and a part of their identity.

Although *tubug* is a vanishing practice, it is an indication of the elders' positive and unselfish act to give pleasure to themselves and to other members of the community.

A story of a successful community empowerment

By Gia Damaso-Dumo
Tubao, La Union

THE STORY of the Tubao Credit Cooperative (TCCI) deserves to be told and retold, especially this month, which is Cooperative Month. In this farming town at the foot of the Cordillera where the municipal hall and town plaza are listed as main tourist attractions, the P3.2-million TCCI building stands out as a monument to a successful community-empowerment endeavor.

With record 22,000 client-members, P240 million in total assets, and 300 credit transactions daily, the cooperative needs no patting on the back to realize that it is made.

It has remained low-profile in spite of the many local and national citations it has received, including the 2001 national award from the Cooperatives Development Authority and a nomination as one of the world's model cooperatives.

In August 1966, Belgian CICM priest, Rev. Fr. Jaime Quatannens, thought of a scheme to liberate the town's poor from their dependence on unscrupulous money lenders. He then formed the Tubao Credit Union out of 39 founding members and an initial capital of P314.

Sounding the battle cry "Quality Service, Service Above Profit," the organization survived its birth pangs through the perseverance of its first president, the late mayor Gregorio Mapalo Sr., who served for the next 15 years.

Its first manager, who served the TCCI until his passing early this year, was Jose Tavares.

Tavares, who was respected for his credibility and expertise, was credited for steering the organization to success and shaping its character for nearly four decades.

Other past board chairmen were Conrado Baltazar, who served for nine years, and Benedicto Rivera who served for six years.

Even as the administrators played a key role, the cooperative's success, especially in its infancy, was prodded by the presence of missionary sisters from the ICM congregation in the supervisory or audit committee, according to an account by Teresita Murakami, a former board member.

Spiritual guidance

Other Belgian priests who succeeded Fr. Quatannens—Fathers Egbert Kraykaamp and Norbert Lietaert—provided spiritual guidance and know-how on managing the organization.

Starting 1982, secular priests took over the work of the missionary priests but even they continued to be part of the TCCI as spiritual directors.

The presence of these clerics lent credibility to the organization whose numbers rose to its present size, which could populate an entire town.

The diverse membership included farmers, employees, businessmen, the self-employed and small entrepreneurs.

With the rapid increase in membership, which was limited to residents within a 50-kilometer radius from the town proper, came an influx of capital.

The cooperative reached its first million mark in 1975; by 1986, that figure had grown to P13.7 million and by 1996, P47.3 million.

At every year's end, the TCCI declares and distributes patronage refunds to its member-borrowers; non-borrowing members receive incentive dividends. Members who attended the annual general assembly are given meal allowances.

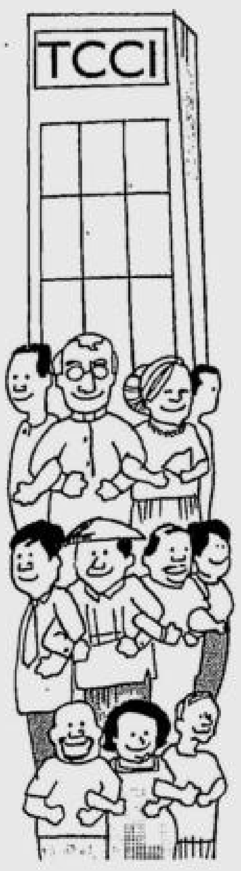
Although the TCCI is involved in mainly one business, which is lending, it also provides other services to its members such as the Saranay (mortuary assistance) and scholarship programs.

Records show that the TCCI, which is manned by only 15 regular staff, averages 300 transactions daily and could be busier than neighboring commercial banks. The main attraction: loans of as much as P300,000 at an interest rate of 16.5 percent per annum provided the borrower has a co-maker and collateral.

In spite of the number of borrowers, the TCCI does not have a collector. "Our members themselves come here to pay their dues," revealed TCCI President Elpidio Fabian.

A relatively high repayment rate shows the effectiveness of teaching members to be accountable for their loans, he said.

"Cooperativism is not an end in itself but a means for specific sectors to appreciate the value of self-reliance. To be dependent on government is unproductive. Only by learning to be self-reliant and creative can our people . . . take the first step towards self-empowerment," he said.



'Only by learning to be self-reliant can our people . . . take the first step towards self-empowerment'

Lola Glo's letter to her first 'apo'

NO LESS than her first granddaughter stands to benefit from President Macapagal-Arroyo's promise of a "strong republic."

"I assure you a strong republic with a strong democracy which you and your generation will inherit," the President wrote to her week-old grandchild, **Mikaela Gloria**.

HOME-TOWN *Snapshots*

The baby's father, Pampanga Vice Gov. Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo, showed Ms Macapagal's handwritten, one-page letter to Mikaela Gloria or "Mica" during an interview last week.

Mikey said the President gave the letter to him and his wife Angela for safekeeping.

The seven-pound Mikaela Gloria, who was named after First Gentleman Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo and Ms Macapagal, was born on Nov. 4 at the Makati Medical Center.

Mikey said Ms Macapagal started the letter by saying how happy she felt when she first held Mica in her arms.

She wished her granddaughter would grow up "to be a good servant of the Lord."

"When you're old enough to read this, I'd like you to understand that with others, I'm working hard for good governance," Ms Macapagal wrote.

According to Mikey, the letter also included prayers and hopes for a stable and bright future for Filipino children.

He said much of the letter was about the "personal feelings of a grandmother." *Tonette Orejas*

Mourning a town loss

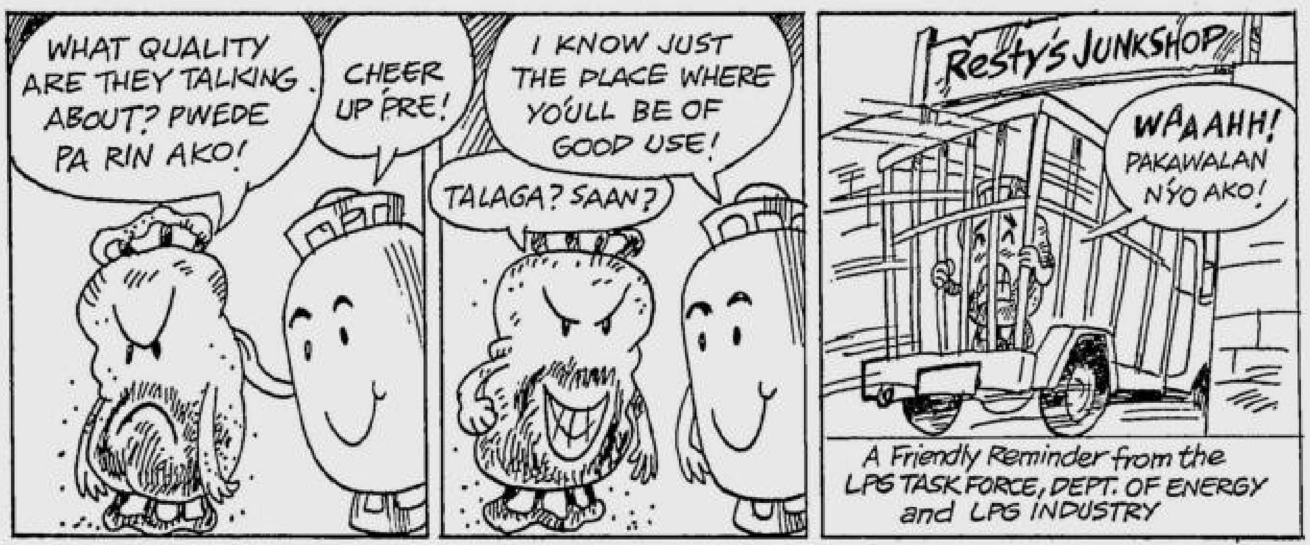
LA SALLE cager **Miguelito Gozum** was buried in Guagua, Pampanga, on Nov. 14 after a two-night wake that saw his townmates mourning the loss of what could have turned out to be another hero in a town that produced many sports greats.

The burial of the 21-year-old Archer was without fanfare, the same way that Gozum's parents Gregorio and Veronica quietly brought home the remains of their eldest son to Guagua.

The couple, who arrived from the United States together with their two children, fetched the remains of their son from the De La Salle University Taft Avenue campus where a wake had been held.

The 6-foot-4 forward, who succumbed to aneurysm on Nov. 8, scored his last points at the DLSU gymnasium where he had played since 1999.

Fans and friends remembered the young Gozum as a "handsome, silent and determined man with a serious demeanor." Some teenagers in the crowd regretted the fatal end of Gozum, saying they pinned their hopes on his becoming another pride of Guagua. *Tonette Orejas*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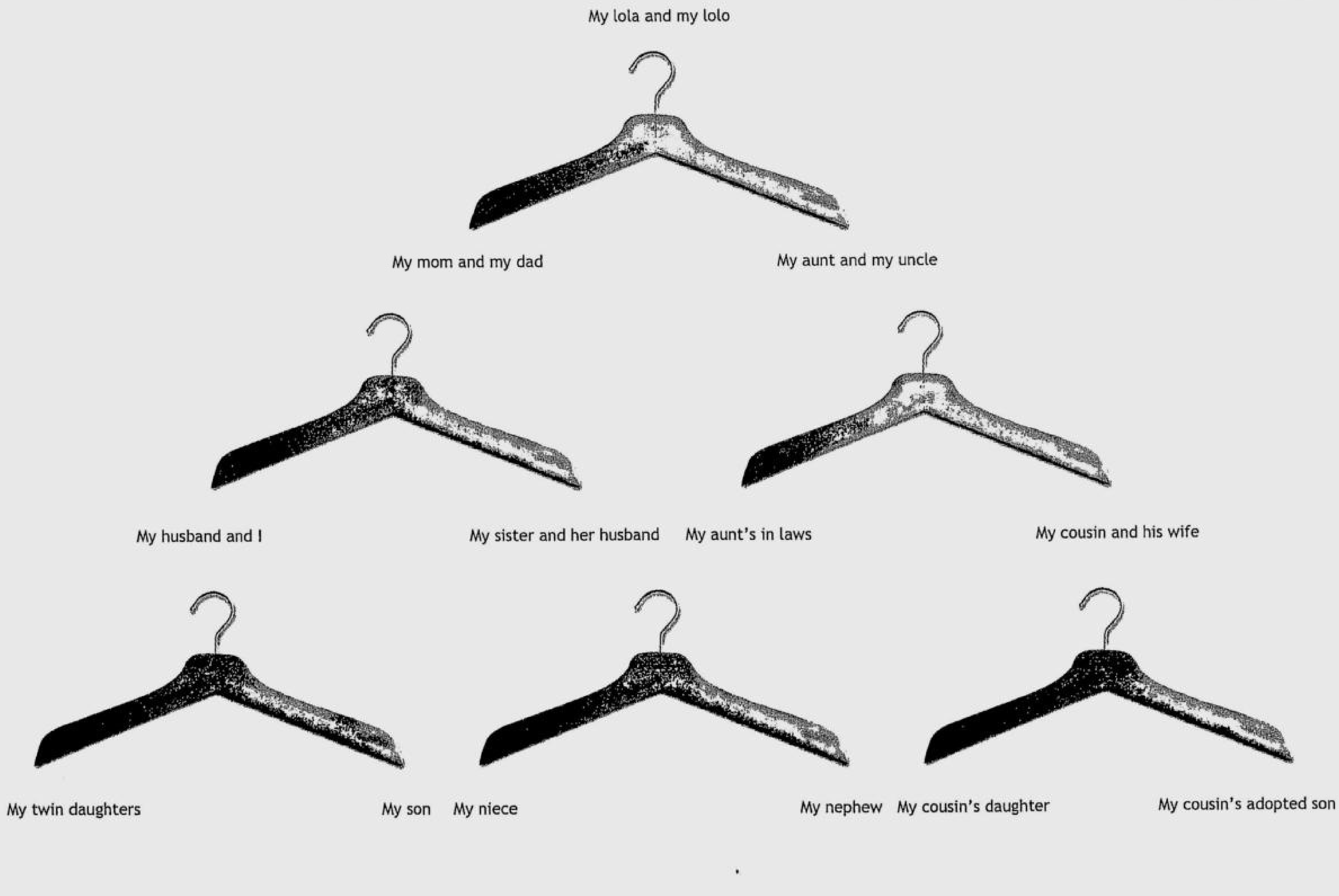

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President assures Meralco of total support

From page A1

joined the meeting.

The President's spokesperson disclosed the meeting only when asked about it during yesterday's news briefing. In the Senate, oppositionist Teresa Aquino-Oreta had dared Malacañang to make the details of the unscheduled meeting public. Oreta, a critic of Camacho's, said the administration needed to dispel speculation that senior Macapagal advisers were doing a squeeze job on the influential Lopez family to secure its support in the 2004 elections.

Financial stability

Perez's working group is "to address Meralco's problems and formulate a plan to maintain its financial stability as a public utility," Tiglao said. The group would be composed of representatives of Meralco, major creditors and government stakeholders such as the Presidential Commission on Good Government, the Government Service Insurance System, the Social Security System and the Landbank.

Through various agencies, the government is the largest shareholder of Meralco, holding a 26-percent stake. Also, the government is guarantor to about $215 million in loans incurred by the utility.

Perez said he was conducting "initial discussions" with Meralco officials and creditors.

"Meralco's stock price has been affected, so we have to address it in terms of finding out what will happen if the Supreme Court finally hands down its decision," Perez told reporters.

Tiglao said the working group would determine how the government could best help Meralco.

He said that during the Friday dinner, the Lopezes "referred" to the high court's decision but did not ask for the President's intervention.

"Of course they said they think the (high court's) decision is not right and probably they'd appeal. That's it. The President simply remarked that the SC is a very independent institution," he said.

"They (the Lopezes) assured us they will ensure the stability of Meralco as a public utility," he added.

When Meralco's belated Nov. 7 motion warning the Supreme Court of "financial turmoil" came to light, Tiglao belittled Meralco's claim that an adverse ruling would lead to the "inevitable collapse" of the economy.

Nothing wrong

Tiglao said the President did not see anything wrong with meeting with the Lopezes so soon.

"The Lopez family is a respected business group in the Philippines. You have a Supreme Court decision which could lead to a lot of problems for Meralco," he said.

"And the President felt that it was an airing of ideas so she didn't see any problem with that, as long as she wasn't alone in talking with them. Her advisers were there," Tiglao said.

He said the Lopezes aired their problems with the SC ruling as well as the Energy Regulatory Commission's refusal to approve their petition for a rate increase.

But he said the Lopezes did not ask for help from the President.

"No (they didn't). They simply put on the table their problems and need at this time to set up an open line of communication," Tiglao stressed.

"The President would like to emphasize that she's committed to implement strictly the SC's decision as soon as it is executory and as soon as the ERC formulates the mechanisms for implementing it," he added.

Perez statement

Perez yesterday also released a statement saying that, following the President's instructions, he had met with officials of Meralco and its major creditors.

He said the move aimed to reach a consensus on the creation of the working group that produce a detailed plan to maintain the power distributor's favorable credit standing.

International credit rating agency Standard and Poor had already downgraded Meralco's rating by two notches, from BB to B+.

This is a warning to investors that putting money in Meralco, the country's second largest company in terms of sales, has become much riskier. In 2001, Meralco generated sales of almost P104 billion and net profits of some P2.5 billion.

"The financial viability of Meralco is of paramount importance to the government given that it is a public utility imbued with public interest," Perez said.

In Malacañang, Tiglao said that Perez had already gone to work. "Secretary Perez scheduled today a conference with Meralco officials and the company's creditors to undertake initial discussion to address the company's problems," Tiglao said.

The working group is to "formulate a detailed working plan to maintain the utility's credit standing," he said.

The government's Energy Regulatory Commission, a quasi judicial body that deals with electric rates, will formulate the mechanism for implementing the refund, Tiglao said.

Securities analysts said regulators could give Meralco eight years to reimburse the amount, and that it would have to raise additional capital to make this possible.

On Monday the government said it had temporarily shelved plans to sell its minority shareholdings in Meralco in the wake of the ruling, which has caused its shares to tumble by as much as 40 percent.

Meralco directors

In the Senate, administration Sen. Ralph Recto called for the release of the minutes of the Meralco directors' meetings from January 1994 to 1998 so the public may know how government representatives in the energy firm's governing board voted on the overbilling issue.

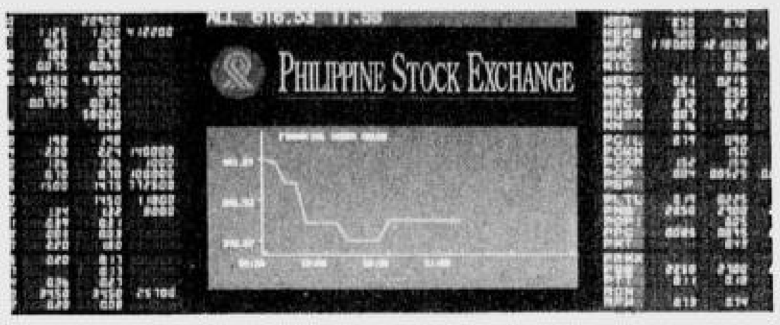
Recto said that government representatives in the Meralco board were remiss in their duties of protecting the public's interest in the utility firm if they approved Meralco's billing formula which the high court struck down on Friday.

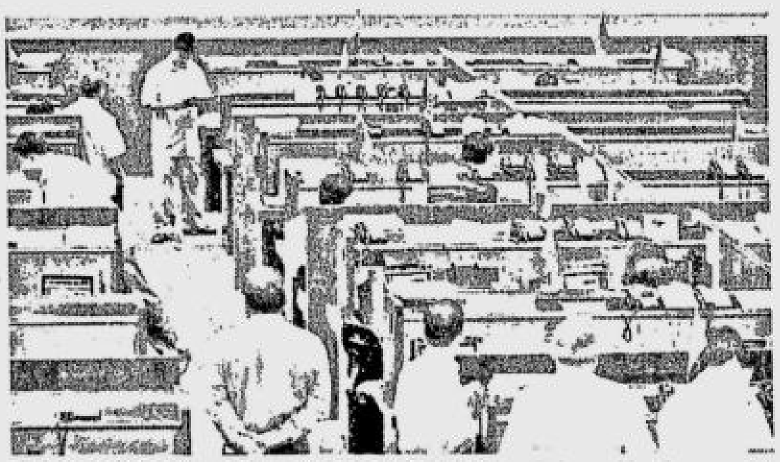
Majority Leader Loren Legarda said the proposed consolidated franchise of Meralco would soon be submitted for floor debate in the Senate.

"We must debate on the extension of the franchise because we have also to look into (Meralco's) financial viability if indeed it will comply with the Supreme Court decision," Legarda said.

"I don't think the court decision should affect the extension of the Meralco franchise of the extension of Meralco."

Legarda said that while consumers must be compensated, the government must also sustain the company's financial viability since a financially distressed Meralco, the country's largest power distributor, may be more disastrous for consumers. *With reports from Ronnel Domingo, AFP*





STARING at the marginal trend on the electronic board in the Philippine Stock Exchange where share prices close 0.9 percent lower Tuesday with falls trimmed by a late recovery by Meralco. AFP

Stock market down . . .

From page A1

the SC decision force them (the utility investors) to charge a rate that is well below an economically viable rate? If that is the case, nobody will invest in utilities in the country anymore," Domingo said.

He said that based on news reports, Meralco claims that a refund of excess charges would mean a return of only 8 percent or well below the maximum 12 percent return on rate base expected by both investors and creditors. "Without making a judgment on the case, (I think) what is important is an investor in utilities must be given an economic return sufficient for them to invest here," Domingo said. RORB is the industry's measure of profitability.

While the main stock market index closed down 9.49 points, or 0.92 percent lower at 1,024.99 points, analysts said bargain hunting on Meralco—which touched an eight-year low on Monday—and other blue chips stanched the losses.

"Investors continued to assess the impact of the Supreme Court ruling on Meralco and other related sectors," said BPI Securities investment analyst Spencer Yap.

Meralco's B shares, which foreigners can trade, gained 3.54 percent or 35 centavos at 10.25 pesos, while the A shares restricted to Filipinos went up 4.82 percent or 40 centavos at P8.70.

"This is a technical bounce for Meralco. Investors were comforted that Meralco may just pay P8 billion and not P28 billion," said Henry Ong, KGI Securities vice president for sales.

Domingo emphasized that because the SC ruling is not yet executory, and Meralco seemed likely to appeal, the actual impact on how the refund would affect other utilities remains to be seen.

"Will the SC now determine the rate of return for utilities? Will the decision affect other utilities or will it only be specific to Meralco in this case?"

He said the impact of the SC decision would be felt only in the coming months, when the investors decide on whether they should continue with their projects.

"The investors themselves will decide if they think the rate of return is reasonable or not. Eventually, if no investments go to utilities, it would only mean that the rate of return is not viable."

Domingo noted that the SC decision came at a time when the government was set to invite bidders for the multibillion-dollar privatization of the National Power Corp.'s transmission and distribution operations.

On Monday, Meralco president Jesus Francisco said the amount of the refund had not been calculated yet, although it could be as low as P8 billion.

Company officials also said the power firm had begun studying various options, including converting its household customers into shareholders, to pay for the refund.

Ong said the market would continue to be volatile in the coming sessions as investors await for further developments on Meralco.

"We see the market's initial support at 1,020. When the market touches that level, maybe we can expect a technical rally," Ong said. *With a report from Reuters*

Refund is P29.2B, say activist scientists

From page A1

household consuming 200 kWh a month, the overcharge amounted to P33.40 a month. The total is P3,573.80, covering the 107 months from February 1994 to December 2002.

Citing Agham's computations, spokesperson Lolita Donato said at a briefing by People Opposed to Warrantless Electricity Rates (Power) that Meralco was again trying to victimize consumers when it claimed that it overcharged them by only P8 billion.

"Simple arithmetic was all it took for us to come up with this figure," added Agham founding member Ramon Ramirez.

"All we needed to do was to multiply 16.7 centavos, the amount with which Meralco overcharged its consumers for every kilowatt hour they consumed, with 175.4 billion, which is the total number of kwh sold by Meralco since 1994," Ramirez explained.

He said his group's computation which included the year 2002 was actually "conservative," as it was based on the assumption that the total power Meralco sold this year was the same as last year's.

Business proposal

In another media briefing, industrialist and consumer welfare advocate Raul Concepcion said the Supreme Court decision would have a chilling effect on other business and industry sectors.

Concepcion suggested the following "win-win" solution for Meralco:

- The over-recoveries and underrecoveries (income exceeding or falling below the maximum 12-percent return on rate base) of Meralco should be computed following the high court ruling not to include income tax as operating expense.
- Over-recoveries should be offset with under-recoveries to arrive at a net recovery due for refund.

On Monday, Meralco president Jesus Francisco said that even with the Supreme Court-mandated formula, the utility's profitability had slid below 12 percent since 1999.

If the refund would cover just the years that the RORB exceeded 12 percent, then Meralco's total refund would only be about P8 billion.

RORB is the industry's measure of profitability.

But the militant labor group Kilusang Mayo Uno said there was no alternative but for Meralco to pay the refund as a lump sum.

Sammy Malunes, KMU spokesperson, said Meralco must immediately refund its customers a total of P28 billion.

"We are certain that the overcharging would amount to more than P8 billion," Malunes said.

"Now it's Meralco's turn to be distressed the same way they traumatize households who get disconnected after failing to pay electric bills," Malunes said.

"Meralco is more than capable of shelling out P28 billion for refunds with its current super profits," he added.

Militant groups had rallied in front of the Supreme Court yesterday to deliver an open letter to the justices asking them to uphold their ruling against Meralco.

"Meralco should not be allowed to operate by cheating its customers. The Supreme Court should stand firm in its decision ordering Meralco to pay back P28 billion in excess charges that the company imposed on its customers," said Leody de Guzman, secretary general of the Bukluran ng Manggagawang Pilipino.

Napocor official

The first energy official to accuse Meralco of overcharging four years ago yesterday urged the government to immediately implement the 16.7 centavos per kwh rollback instead of allowing the power distributor to paint dire scenarios due to the Supreme Court order.

Guido Delgado, former president of the National Power Corp., said the government must also take charge of collecting the refundable amount from Meralco—whether it was P8 or P28 billion—and use the funds to bring relief to all electricity consumers.

Delgado was the Napocor president during the time of Ramos and was, in early 1998, the first government official to ever accuse Meralco of overcharging. The first person to come out in public and accuse Meralco of overcharging was consumer advocate Jose Elpidio Isip, who has since passed away.

Isip's Philippine Consumers Foundation Inc. won a P1.5-billion refund case against Meralco before the Quezon City Regional Trial Court in 1991. Meralco brought the case before the Supreme Court, however. But to date, no decision has been handed down yet. *With reports from Gerald G. Lacuarta, Philip Tubeza, Clarissa Batino*

December surprise in Baguio

By Vincent Cabreza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—Consumers here should be "pleasantly surprised" next month when they receive their November power bill. A National Power Corp. official said next month's bill would no longer carry the controversial purchased power adjustment (PPA) charges.

The missing PPA is part of Napocor's newly restructured billing system, said Alfredo Licudine, Napocor manager for corporate planning in North Luzon.

The new basic rate for electricity will be one of several rate adjustments, which consumers will experience under a deregulated electric industry, Licudine said.

Gerardo Versoza, general manager of the Benguet Electric Cooperative, said the Napocor bills he received for the cooperative's October consumption was 9.22 centavos lower than their September billing.

This was the result of the approved unbundling of Napocor's rates, which refers to the breakdown and rationalization of corporate charges a power distributor imposes on its consumers.

Leyteños want Imelda back in Congress

From page A1

trict of Leyte. But not because they believe she is more qualified to represent them than the incumbent, Rep. Ted Failon.

It's the P2-billion settlement that Mrs. Marcos reportedly received from the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. that's making the Leyteños all agog for an Imelda comeback.

"People there (Leyte), hearing the P2-billion settlement, are convincing her to run for Congress," said a knowledgeable congressman who asked not to be named.

"That's their biggest problem because everybody believes in that (P2-billion deal) so come election time, they (voters) will ask for money," the congressman added.

The congressman said that the P2-billion deal was true but he declined to reveal his sources.

He said the P2 billion obtained by Mrs. Marcos from the family of the late Ramon Cojuangco, former PLDT president, was "just the tip of the iceberg" considering the current value of the PLDT shares Mrs. Marcos claimed were owned by her late husband, President Ferdinand Marcos.

The congressman said that if the P2-billion settlement is not true, Marcos could have sued the core Mrs. Marcos loyalists who have severed ties with her following the settlement.

The congressman was referring to Cherry Cobarrubias, leader of the Marcos Loyalists national headquarters, broadcaster Rita Gaddi and businessmen Anthony Violago and Nonoy Escolin Jr. who told the INQUIRER recently about their decision to distance themselves from Mrs. Marcos.

"If the accusation is not true, how come Imelda and the Cojuangcos are mum about it?" the congressman said.

The congressman went on to speculate that Marcos might run for a Congress seat but not for the presidency.

P30-M election expense

He said the election for the first district, which has 300,000 constituents, would cost P30 million while it would cost P8 billion to P10 billion to win a presidential elections.

The congressman said Mrs. Marcos was besieged with requests to run against Failon and Remedios Petilla, the incumbent governor.

Mrs. Marcos was representative of the first district of Leyte from 1995 to 1998 and was succeeded by her nephew Alfred Romualdez who lost to Failon in 2001.

Asked to comment, Failon described as "thrilling news" the possibility of Marcos running for his district again.

Failon scored one of the 2001 elections' most sensational victories as he defeated a Romualdez in his own turf. Romualdez had contested Failon's election.

"I welcome Imelda running for Leyte. That will be very exciting," Failon said.

Failon disclosed that he has not made up his mind whether to seek reelection.

"But if I will not run, I will support Imelda," Failon said.

He said he was fed up with politicking in his district. Failon represents one of Leyte's five congressional districts.

Failon said he had asked Rep. Imee Marcos if her mother is interested to run for her former seat "because of the possibility that I may not run for reelection."

But he said Mrs. Marcos' daughter told him it's not yet been discussed in the family.

Too good to be true

Failon laughed off the reported P2-billion settlement and said this was not being talked about in Leyte at all.

"It's just too good to be true," he said. Asked why, he laughed, "P2 billion in cash? Placed in computer boxes? Ha ha."

The disillusioned loyalists of Mrs. Marcos had told the INQUIRER that the P2 billion was paid in cash and delivered in computer boxes to Mrs. Marcos in her Pacific Plaza condo.

Deposit in small amounts

The congressman also disclosed he had information that Marcos has been depositing the money in small amounts because she could neither deposit it in full nor keep it in her house.

"They cannot deposit it in the bank (in one transaction). I heard that she deposits it slowly because she cannot keep it all with her forever," the congressman told the INQUIRER.

Lacson declares Palace bid, defies Church on population

POE JR.

From page A1

Defensor-Santiago's People's Reform Party, Estrada's Partido ng Masa, Senators Aquilino Pimentel and Sergio Osmeña's PDP-Laban.

ANGARA

We'll beat her'

"We will beat her (President Macapagal-Arroyo)," Lacson said. Though Ms Macapagal has not announced her political plans, members of the ruling coalition led by the Lakas-NUCD have said she is certain to seek a full six-year term and that her selection as her party' s standard bearer is a foregone conclusion.

In May, the President also started to reorganize her own party, Kabalikat ng Malayang Pilipino (Kampi), to which her personal public relations man of long standing, Dante Ang, was elected president.

Last week, Ang resigned all his government posts to concentrate, he said, on the recruitment of supporters for Kampi from the grassroots.

The 54-year-old former chief of the Philippine National Police during the Estrada presidency, Lacson accused Ms Macapagal of driving the country to ruin.

He said she's "so obsessed with her electoral chances in 2004" that "resources are not put to good use nor serve proper social and economic ends."

Nation in ICU

The state of the nation is "worthy of the ICU, or intensive care unit," Lacson also said.

Whether it is the security situation, the breakdown of law and order, or even the economy, which is supposed to be the academic expertise of the present Malacañang occupant, the nation is gravely ill."

Lacson said what was wrong with the PNP when he took over in 2000 is also what is wrong with the Macapagal administration "inept, corrupt, and undisciplined officials."

"This present leadership, sad to say, has neither the sense to run the government efficiently, nor the will to fight corruption in real terms," he added.

The result is a "mind-boggling" budget deficit that is likely to hit 90 percent above the target deficit. and if 2002 is bad enough, we haven't seen the worse. 2003 is likely to be worse," Lacson said.

Photo ops hit

He further charged that President Macapagal was more interested in "photo opportunities" such as posing in front of handcuffed crime suspects or dead gangsters rather than in running the country.

"Filipinos are living witness to a national leader whose Russian roulette style of governance makes it more precarious for a citizen of this country as he develops the feeling that he's one of the 80 million gambling pieces," Lacson said.

"Everyday the entire nation slips deeper and deeper into misery and despair. There's no focus, no vision and no sense of direction."

Ready for clash with church

Asked if he was afraid of provoking church ire over his call for the use of condoms and birth control pills, Lacson said, "I am not. If you are a leader of a country, you should be concerned with the 80 million Filipinos, not a particular group. What is good for 80 million Filipinos should take priority."

He said he was prepared for a collision with the church on the issue of population growth which now stands at 2.3 percent, one of the highest in the world. *With reports from Gerard Lacuarta, AFP, Reuters*

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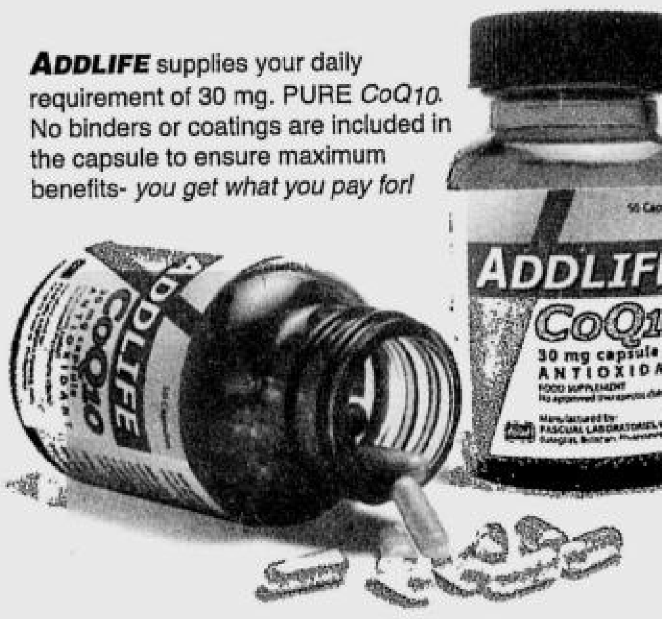

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SPORTS

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CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

UST trips Ateneo, gains semis

By Roy Luarca

GAMES TODAY *(Makati Coliseum)*
2 p.m.—SSC vs UE
4 p.m.—Las Piñas vs UV

THE SONS also rise.

Jinino Manansala and Danilo Pribhdas Jr., reliving the exploits of their fathers, played key roles in University of Santo Tomas' 74-71 victory over favored Ateneo yesterday in the Champions League 2002 at the Makati Coliseum.

The 5-foot-8 Manansala, son of former PBA hotshot Jimmy, nailed the pivotal triple while the 6-foot-2 Pribhdas, namesake of the late PBA center, fired a team-high 15 points as UST barged into the semifinals of the knockout tournament featuring the country's top collegiate teams.

Manansala's three-pointer knotted the game at 71 with 52 seconds left, after which Cyrus Baguio hit a turnaround jumper and Jemal Vizcarra split his freethrows for the final count.

Reigning UAAP MVP Enrico Villanueva showed up with Rich Alvarez, the 2000-2001 MVP, but they failed to lift the Eagles against the determined Tigers of coach Aric del Rosario.

After Baguio's go-ahead basket, Ateneo coach Joel Banal sued for time and Villanueva was set up for a low post play. Defying his defenders, Villanueva pulled up a jumper but the ball veered to the right. Vizcarra collared the rebound and drew Villanueva's fifth foul that sent the Tiger to the free throw line.

Scores:

UST 74—Pribhdas 15, Villamin 12, Espiritu 9, Vizcarra 8, Manansala 7, Luanzon 7, Baguio 5, Sumalinog 5, De Guman 3, Del Rosario 3.

ATENEO 71—Gonzales 16, Chia 15, Alvarez 10, Villanueva 9, Tenorio 8, Cruz 7, Escalona 3, Intal 2, Tadeo 1, Banal 1, Benitez 0, Kramer 0, Elmido 0, Quimpo 0.

Quarters: 28-10, 37-38, 56-55, 74-71.

UST'S Jinino Manansala (11), Don Villamin and Christian Luanzon (right) harass Ateneo's Rich Alvarez during their Champions League 2002 game yesterday. UST won, 74-71, to book a semifinals seat.

VAL HANDUMON

Russia firm heads search for new PBA commissioner

By Dennis U. Eroa

NOT A few were surprised when PBA chair Butch Alejo of Purefoods told the media that the search for the new PBA commissioner is being undertaken by an "executive headhunter."

That headhunter turned out to be not a man nor a woman, but a firm, now based in Russia, but originally organized in the United States in 1951. The name of the firm is Ward Howell International, founded by H. Wardwell Howell.

Mr. Howell had previously headed the executive search arm of Mckinsey & Co., then and today is a worldwide leader in management consulting profession.

According to the Internet, Ward Howell International grew to a total of 60 offices in 36 countries around the world and is now the leading executive search firm in Russia.

One of the world's oldest and largest recruitment consulting companies, Ward Howell International operates in a very specific market segment of executive search, and its primary task is to identify and recruit senior managers for client companies in many different industrial sectors.

Ward Howell's missions are rooted in the economy, clients, staff and the world. It provides clients with customized solutions for management staffing problems through the recruitment of the best possible talent for existing openings in senior executive positions.

It also prides itself in the world of international executive search as an ethical and professional competitor.

Cristino ``Tito" Panlilio, a candidate for PBA commissioner, told the INQUIRER yesterday that he was asked by the firm to submit his resumé. But he stressed that nobody yet from the PBA board has started to interview him.

Alejo said they will start talking to people after Ward Howell has pruned the candidates' list. Alejo did not say how much the PBA has paid Ward Howell for the not-so-easy job.

Thunder, Tigers eye q'final berths

GAMES TODAY *(Astrodome)*
5:30 p.m.—Coca Cola vs Sta. Lucia
7:30 p..m.—Purefoods vs Red Bull

RED Bull and Coca Cola shoot for quarterfinals berths as they clash with separate foes today in the Selecta PBA All-Filipino Cup at the Astrodome.

Red Bull (4-1) tries to bounce back after losing to Talk N' Text, 77-67, at the Ynares Center in Antipolo City, when it meets Purefoods at 7:30 p.m.

Coca Cola, which shares the lead with Red Bull, tests Sta. Lucia in the 5:30 p.m.opener.

Tournament format calls for the top six teams after the single round robin eliminations to advance in the next round with the top two teams automatically seeded to semifinals.

Dennis U. Eroa

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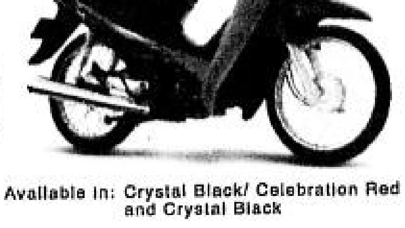

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SUZUKI
Ride the winds of change

With Shaquille missing, Yao takes starring role

By John Nadel
AP Sports Writer

LOS ANGELES—Yao Ming was nothing more than a bit player in his first seven NBA games.

That sure changed in No. 8.

The 2.29-meter (7-foot-6) rookie shot 9-for-9 and doubled his career high with 20 points Sunday night. Yao played his first starring role for the Houston Rockets, helping them beat the three-time defending NBA champion Los Angeles Lakers, 93-89.

"He understands basketball stuff very well," Rockets coach Rudy Tomjanovich said. "We knew that once he got comfortable, the games were going to get better, and the minutes that he will get are going to get better."

Of course, Shaquille O'Neal wasn't around to jam up the middle, and Yao took full advantage, getting 8 points on dunks.

"He definitely had an impact on this game. But it's not going to be that way when No. 34 gets back," Lakers' guard Brian Shaw said, referring to O'Neal.

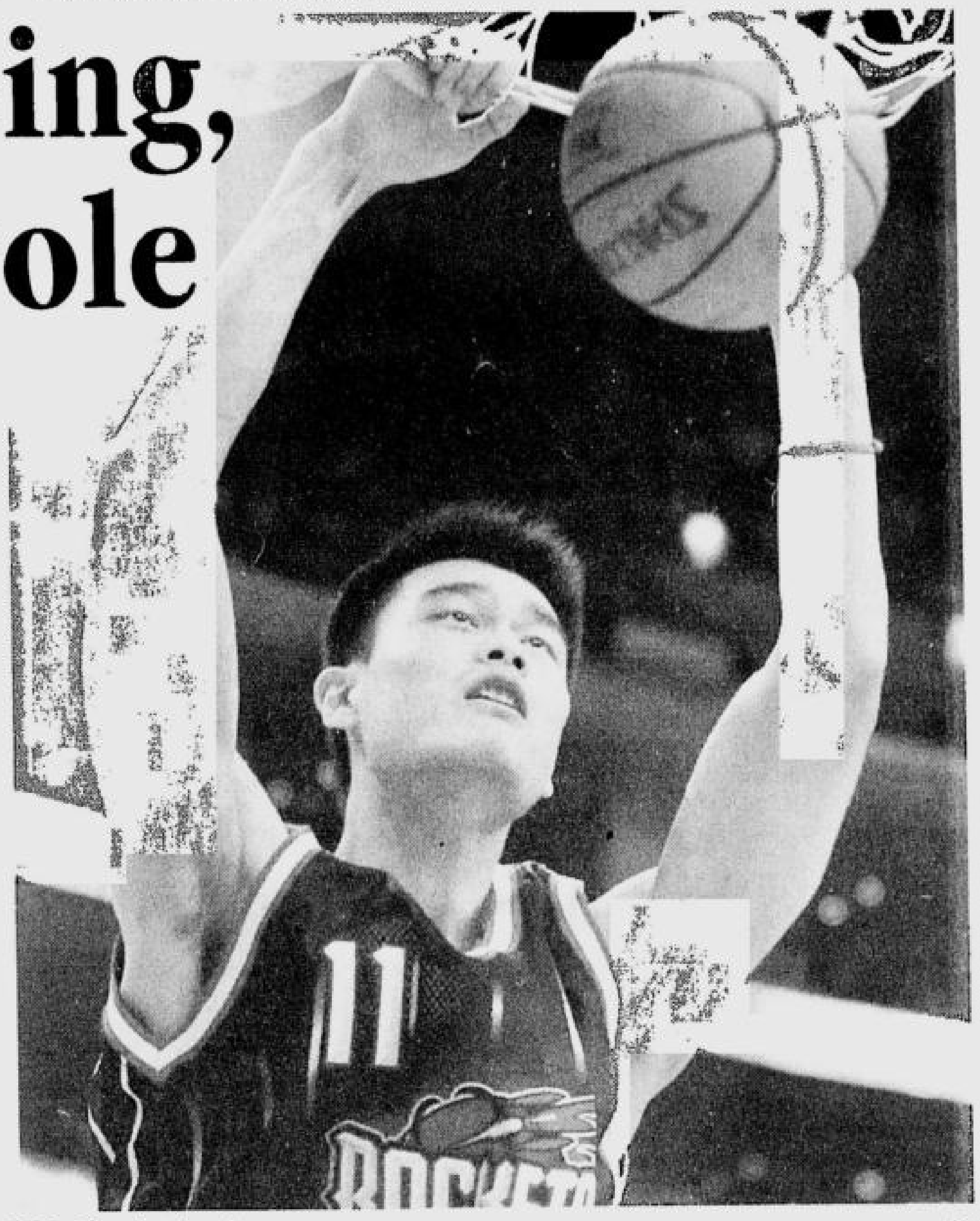
Yao, the first overall pick in last summer's NBA draft, had a previous single-game high of 10 points. That's what he scored Friday on 5-for-6 shooting in 14 minutes at Phoenix.

The 22-year-old Yao played 23 minutes against the Lakers — one under his career high.

"You saw the finished product today," Tomjanovich said. "He played a great game, and the reason why we won was because of the buckets that he had down the stretch, getting to the line."

Complete Results

Atlanta 117, Toronto 92; New York 94, Detroit 91; New Jersey 99, Denver 79; San Antonio 104, Cleveland 78; LA Clippers 99, Golden State 89. *AFP*



YAO: Showing them how.

AFP

Kings-Bulls clash on Solar today

LOCAL NBA fan favorites Sacramento Kings take on the young and talented Chicago Bulls live at 11 a.m. today (Wednesday, Nov. 20) on the Solar Sports Network (Channel 29 on Skycable and Homecable), with a replay at 7 p.m.

The powerhouse Kings (7-4 win-loss) preserved their unbeaten record at home when All-Star forward Chris Webber hit a 21-foot jump shot with 1.5 seconds remaining in a 101-99 victory over the Orlando Magic on Monday. Webber (22.9 points/game) leads the Kings in scoring. Reserve point guard Bobby Jackson (18.6 points/game) and sharp-shooting Peja Stojakovic (17.7 points/game) provide ample scoring support, especially in the absence of injured Mike Bibby until mid-December.

Meanwhile, the Bulls are led by their guard tandem of Jalen Rose (22.8 points/game) and former Duke University standout Jay Williams, the second overall pick in this year's NBA Draft. Williams has impressed with his versatility. He leads the team in assists (6.1 assists/game), is second in scoring (11.7 points/game) and third in rebounds (4.9/game).

Against Jason Kidd and the New Jersey Nets last week, Williams posted his first career triple-double with 26 points, 13 assists and 14 rebounds as the Bulls upset the reigning Eastern Conference champions.

Ateneo 'Hall' inauguration set

By Dennis U. Eroa

THE PRESTIGIOUS Ateneo Sports Hall of Fame, which will house the portraits and memorabilia of the school's finest and legendary athletes, will be inaugurated on Saturday.

Ateneo has allocated a space at the Moro Lorenzo Sports Center for the Sports Hall of Fame. It is called the M.L. Escaler Wing: Nest of the Sports Hall of Fame Blue Eagles. A Mass at 5:30 p.m. will kick off the ceremonies to be attended by past and present Ateneo sporting heroes.

Victor Sison, chair of the Hall of Fame Committee of the Ateneo Alumni Association, and Tito Panlilio made the announcement during yesterday's PSA Forum sponsored by Red Bull, Agfa Color and Pioneer Insurance at the Holiday Inn.

"I would like to invite members of the PSA to this occasion," said Sison, once the country's top goalkeeper, who saw action in two Asian Games (1954 Manila and 1958 New Delhi).

Sison said the "Hall" is a concrete and physical motivation for kids to strive and work hard.

Panlilio, one of the candidates to become the new PBA Commissioner Jun Bernardino, said the hall is a first in the country's sporting history.

"This should serve as a inspiration for young athletes," Panlilio said. The "Hall" cost P5M.

A total of 113 athletes, coaches, athletic directors, cheerleaders and sports officials have been installed to the "Hall." The Hall will also feature the portraits of another 12 individuals, who have been given special awards for their outstanding contributions that have helped Ateneo athletes and teams in one way or another and Philippine sports in general.

'Bakbakan' derby at Big Dome tonight

THE 2002 Bakbakan National 7-Stag Derby, a grand showdown of 233 gamefowl breeders from Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao, enters its semifinal round tonight at the Araneta Coliseum. Sponsor is Progressive Conditioner Concentrate.

Dangling a guaranteed prize of P3 million, the three-day stagfest started Monday night with 149 fights. The finals will be held on Nov. 22.

With three points each were CVGBA Fly High II, Three Kings II, Firefly Binangonan JJ, Joeven, Scorpio, Honey Piwa Lucban I LGBA, Golden Circle I, Sagupaan Mite Free 7, Firebird II LGBA, JJ and Princess and LGBA Fat Boys E-68.

Batang Pinoy Games entry list swells

THE REGISTRY for the fourth Philippine National Youth Games-Batang Pinoy is expected to break the target attendance of 3,500 athletes, officials and delegation members this week even as Puerto Princesa stepped up on its preparations for the games slated Dec. 1 to 7.

A total of 2,500 athletes, officials and delegation members have already registered for the games as of Friday last week and according to Batang Pinoy officials led by project director Ariel Paredes, targets will be within bounds once the deadline is through this week.

PSC Chair Eric Buhain is again flying to the Palawan capital today (Wednesday, Nov. 20) to check on Puerto Princesa's preparations which turned relentless after Edward Hagedorn was officially declared mayor of Palawan's capital city by the Commission on Elections last week.

"Puerto Princesa is now undergoing massive preparations for the Batang Pinoy and that people there are working more than their usual working hours to ensure the success of the games," said Buhain.

Paredes said Buhain and Hagedorn will do the rounds today (Wednesday) of the various venues for the Batang Pinoy, the first major national sporting event Puerto Princesa is hosting in its sports complex inside Sta. Monica Heights.

"[Puerto Princesa] City hall has been very cooperative and very active and with such an attitude, we feel the fourth edition of the Batang Pinoy will again be a success," said Paredes.

According to Buhain, the PSC, in an effort to entice the 115 local sports councils to send delegations to the Batang Pinoy, has cornered discounts for delegation members from Air Philippines, WG&A Super Ferry, Negros Navigation and Sulpicio Lines.

Among the 21 sports included in the fourth Batang Pinoy calendar are athletics, badminton, baseball, boxing, chess, dancesports, football, golf, gymnastics, judo, karatedo, lawn tennis, softball, swimming, table tennis, taekwondo, and volleyball.

There are 115 local sports councils (LSCs) or local government units have been traditionally sending teams to the Batang Pinoy and Buhain said he is optimistic most if not all will have a delegation in Puerto Princesa.

The registry as of last week showed more than a third of the 115 LSCs have turned in their registration forms. The rest, mostly from the Visayas and Mindanao, are expected this week, according to Paredes.

Suzara reelected

RAMON "Tats" Suzara was elected member for a third term of the Federation Internationale de Volleyball (FIVB) Development Commission during the federation's 28th World Congress in Buenos Aires, Argentina, last month.

Suzara, administrator of the Philippine Institute of Sports (formerly Ultra) in Pasig City, was elected in absentia to the commission or council, which he is a member of since 1994. Membership to any of the FIVB, the world governing body for volleyball, commission carries a term of four years.

Suzara is also chairman of the marketing and management committee of the Asian Volleyball Confederation and is a member of the World Men's League Council and the World Women's Volleyball Grand Prix Council.

For the feat, Suzara received a personal congratulatory letter from FIVB president Dr. Ruben H. Acosta.

NO MASTERS?
The New York Times suggested in an editorial yesterday that Tiger Woods skip the US Masters next year in protest over the Masters officials' continued refusal to accept women as members. Woods has yet to make a comment

Paragua tumbles in Greece

GM candidate Mark Paragua tumbled and so did the other Filipino bets in the fifth round of the World Youth Chess championships 2002 in Heraklio, Crete, Greece.

Stalled by a draw in the fourth round, Paragua suffered his first loss in the boys' under-18 division when he yielded to fellow IM Zviad Izoria of Georgia and stayed at 3.5 points.

National Master Roderick Nava, competing in the same group, was also beaten by Victor Laznicka of Czech Republic and remained at 2.5 points.

Nelson Mariano III met the same fate, bowing to German Falko Bindrich for 3 points in the boys' 12-under.

The tale of woe extended to the distaff side where Aices Salvador yielded to German Judith Fuchs in the under-12 and Cheradee Chardine Camacho surrendered to Briton Amisha Parmar in the under-10. Salvador has 2 points and Camacho one.

Only Vic Neil Villanueva evaded the rash of defeats, halving the point with Loan Rees of Wales for 2.5 points in the boys' 14-under.

Engineer Joseph Dumuk, the National Chess Federation of the Philippines Region I coordinator, is delegation head of the Filipino youngsters.

Roy Luarca

DigitAll elims start tomorrow

WITH the perfect golfing weather holding on, the hunt for the six titles up for grabs is expected to be tight when national elimination series for the Samsung DigitAll Challenge kicks off tomorrow (Thursday, Nov. 21) at the challenging Faldo course of the Eagle Ridge Gold and Country Club in Gen. Trias, Cavite.

There will be four divisions in the men's event and two in the ladies to be disputed and most of the entries will be playing with their swings very much in harness due to the bounty of highly competitive amateur events the past few weeks.

Division winners in the 36-hole tourney which is part of a three-in-one event dubbed as the Samsung DigitAll Golf Challenge, will join the qualifiers from three other legs including one in Cebu to the national finals next year.

Handicap classifications will be championship (0-4), Class A (5-9) Class B (10-14) and Class C (15-19) for men and Class A (0-9) and Class B (10-18) for ladies

Special time and trophies will be awarded to the top finishers while Samsung appliances including a TV set, VCD, microwave oven, washing machine and refrigerator will be raffled off.

Tuason racefest slated

THE ANNUAL Arthur Tuason Memorial Cup, which is held in memory of the late racing legend Arthur Tuason is now on its third year giving away more cash and prizes.

The winner of the "No license-no experience required" Bridgestone KT novice will come home home P40,000 richer plus a set of drive mag wheels, F1 giftpack and other premium items.

While the country's top drivers from the Red Horse KT-Expert class will come home with no less than P20,000 cash and prizes.

"The memorial cup has always been the most awaited karting event, not only for the big cash prize at stake but because it brings together, new, professionals, even inactive karters for a weekend of pure racing fun," said the youngest Filipino Formula 3 Driver, JP Tuason, son of the late Arthur Tuason, who along with his wife, organizes the race.

Umbro hits RP

UMBRO, the name trusted by professional and world-class football players, is now in the Philippines.

Tagged the football authority, Umbro brings to the country its own special line of casual wear, footwear, and accessories suitable for the cool, young, and active Filipino lifestyle.

Umbro International was established in 1924 in Cheshire (England), and has grown into a world-leading football brand, producing apparel, footwear and equipment designed specifically for football.

Eala facing adultery raps

From page A24

plained that she slept at her parents' house in Binangonan, Rizal, or that she was kept busy attending to clients and keeping appointments related to her work," Guevarra said.

"With regard to Noli's cell phone calls and text messages, Irene admitted that she was going out on dates with him," Guevarra added.

Guevarra said he had also seen the respondents together twice during that period.

The complainant said he confronted the two the second time he saw them together, but Guevarra said he eventually let them go "to avoid trouble."

After that, Moje left their conjugal home in Pasig, taking her clothes and most of her personal belongings.

Moje then called up her husband and told him she was leaving him to live with Eala.

Guevarra said he went to Moje's party in April 2001 to greet her on her 25th birthday, only to find the two respondents "celebrating with her entire family and friends.

"They all looked surprised to see (me), but (I) felt so angry and humiliated that (I) left the place immediately," Guevarra said.

Guevarra also said that Moje returned to their home several days later and took the rest of her belongings.

Guevarra said Moje left behind a love letter, which Eala apparently gave to Moje on her wedding day.

Guevarra said he soon found out that Moje had moved to a house in New Manila, where Eala's Ford Expedition had been constantly seen.

"They were even flaunting their adulterous relationship as they attended social functions together," Guevarra said, adding that the two even formed an entertainment company in October 2001.

Moje allegedly gave birth to a girl at the St. Luke's Hospital last Feb. 14 and listed Eala as the child's father.

But in an interview with the INQUIRER, Eala said he has not received any documents regarding the case.

"This is a big surprise," said Eala. "I just talked to Mr. Guevarra and he denied having filed any case against me. I have not even received anything about the alleged case. As of this minute, I have received no proof that I am facing charges."

EALA

He said he was aware that Guevarra and Moje are busy fixing their annulment papers.

"I am also in the midst of fixing the annulment papers of my marriage," Eala said.

Eala is one of the front-runners for the post of PBA commissioner as Jun Bernardino is set to retire next month.

"The timing of this, *medyo* suspicious," said Eala. "I have no intelligent comment about the alleged case."

With a report from ASM

PCA Open: Arcilla-Mora duo reaches 3rd round

By Marc Anthony Reyes

DEFENDING doubles champions Johnny Arcilla and Michael Mora III yesterday survived a first-set scare from power-hitting pair of Mark Grajeda and Randy De Guzman to prevail, 7-6 (5), 6-4, and advance to the third round of the PCA Open at the Philippine Columbian Association indoor courts.

Lulled into complacency by their victory as partners in the Escudero Cup last October, Arcilla and Mora only took things seriously after getting a big jolt in the first set where they suddenly found themselves trailing the highly spirited Grajeda-De Guzman duo, 2-5.

"We were surprised, this is the first time we faced them as partners," said Arcilla, who also won the singles in the Escudero Cup held in San Pablo City, Laguna. "I'm glad we were able to survive them."

That only happened when the 22-year-old RP No. 1 Arcilla and 25-year-old singles fourth-seed Mora steadied their nerves to expertly handle Grajeda's power serves and De Guzman's nifty volleys, dramatically winning four games in succession to even lead at 6-5.

Grajeda, a burly-24 year-old who conducts tennis lessons for Ateneo grade-schoolers, rocked the defending champions with his formidable forehand to force a tiebreak.

"I thought we can pull it through," said Grajeda, "but they handled things better than us."

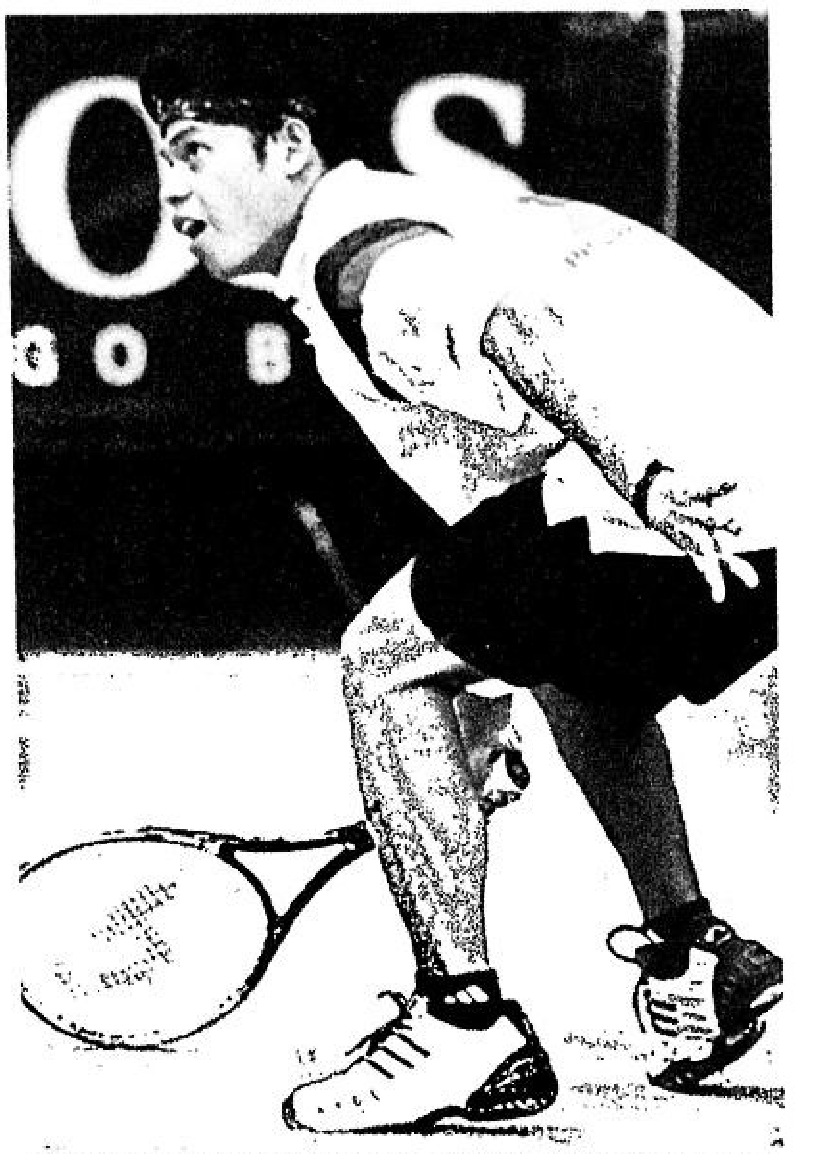
That included the use of brute force, which Arcilla–unlike Grajeda– managed to rein in as he smashed winners that bounced off the gallery. His returns enabled them to climb from 5-2 in the tiebreak to win it, 7-5.

Grajeda and De Guzman took a 3-2 lead in the second set only to lose steam just as Arcilla and Mora were picking up speed.

"We tired them out," said Arcilla, whose forehand from the baseline landed at the footsteps of De Guzman, who next botched a backhand return for match point.

Other winners in the tourney presented by Dunlop and Accel were Jessie Lapore and Rolando Ruel Jr., Joseph Victorino and Alexander Lazaro and Jandrick de Castro and RM Lista.

Men's and women's singles resume today in the event also sponsored by Chowking, Photokina, PBCom, Cola Cola, San Miguel Corp., PVL Restaurant-Little Lawrence, Toby's Copacabana, Trans-Asia Power and Philippine Star.



ARCILLA, shown in this file photo, survived a big scare to win his PCA Open men's doubles match with Mora yesterday.

Casino Filipino to host Martial Arts meet

DEFENSE Tactics Center will host the first-ever Mixed Martial Arts tournament dubbed as the ``Mayhem in Manila" slated on Nov. 23 at the Casino Filipino Amphitheater in Paranaque City.

Practitioners of the different martial arts disciplines, namely, jujitsu, yaw-yan, sari-an, boxing, submission fighting, suntokaran todo bakbakan, pencak silat, judo, freestyle, wrestling, taekwondo, karate, street fighting, tracma, pancrase and dumog will mix it up in this tournament which is also called the Universal Reality Combat Championship.

The event starts at 7 p.m.

Tournament director Alvin Aguilar said the tourney is a first in the history of martial arts in the country.

"This fight extravaganza is certain to raise the caliber of martial arts practitioners in the country," said Aguilar. "We're also preparing for international competitions where Filipinos can stamp a mark."

According to Aguilar, this event entered the mainstream in 1994 when the inaugural First Ultimate Fighting Championship started in the United States.

Events were also held at the Taj Majal in Las Vegas and the Tokyo Dome.

Aguilar said local fighters have already won five golds and three silver medals in various competitions abroad.

For ticket inquiries, call Red Corner Gym at 867-80-59. Tickets at P280 apiece will also be sold at the venue.

Hewitt earns $15M

ADELAIADE, Australia—Lleyton Hewitt earned nearly US$15 million playing tennis this season, but says he'd do it all for nothing.

Returning to his home town on Tuesday after retaining the season-end No.1 ranking and successfully defending the Masters Cup title in Shanghai, Hewitt said it was his love of the game and his competitive spirit that drove him.

"It's obviously great that I'm getting fantastic money playing and going out there and doing something I love," he said. "But I'd be playing if there was no money.

"It's like Davis Cup, there's not much money playing Davis Cup. When I set my schedule at the start of the year Davis Cup is the first thing that I write down." *AP*

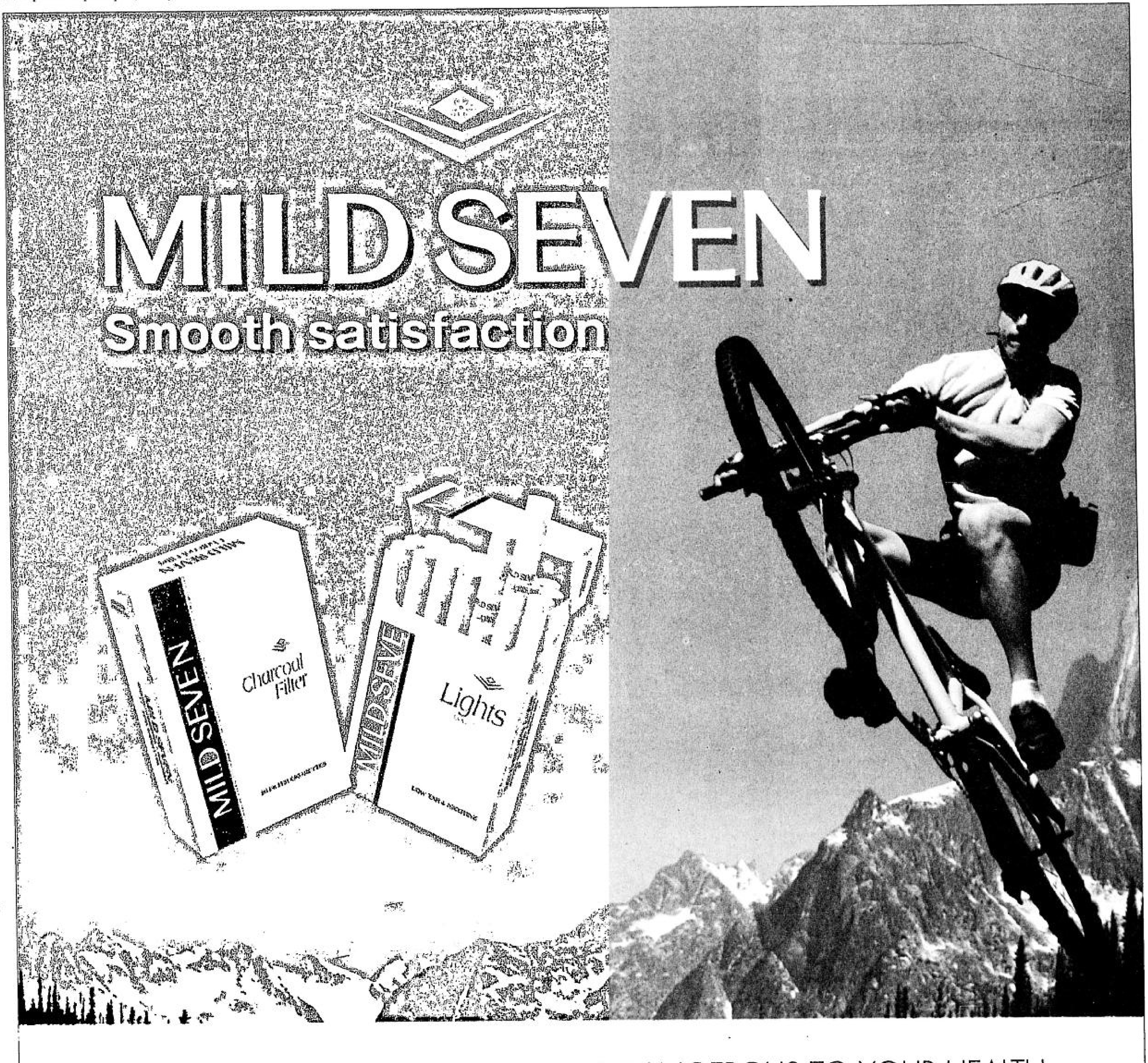
Sotto, Roman head Letran golf tilt cast at Intramuros

THE LETRAN Golfers Association is holding its second tournament for the year at the Club Intramuros golf course tomorrow, Nov. 21, at 12 noon. The course is memorable to Letranites since it is within the Intramuros walls they know so well.

Around 90 Letran alumni, students and friends are expected to participate, led by Sen. Vicente Sotto III, Gov. Ding Roman of Bataan and Rep. Ted Failon of Leyte who are expected to hit ceremonial balls. Comedian Vic Sotto, who won the first tournament, has also pledged to attend and defend his championship in the company of his other golfing brothers, Val and Maru.

Ed Picson of the Organizing Committee promises a fun time for all as valuable prizes will be raffled off. Tickets are pegged at only P900 inclusive of green fee, dinner and raffle stub.

Interested parties may call the Letran Alumni Association at 527-1775 or Mr. Baby Tabuena of the Organizing Committee at 0918-3200099.



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Philam tops Nokia golfest

PHILAM Homes won in the rain on Monday to win the Nokia Grand Intervillage golf tournament at Orchard's Palmer in Dasmariñas, Cavite.

Junie Fontanilla scored 39 points in the 12-to-play, 10-to-count event, as he sparked the lowly-regarded Philam Homes to a winning total of 658.

Philam made only 302 in the first round last week and was not considered a strong title contender with that.

Magallanes, the first-round leader at 318, had 337 points on the final 18 holes for a 655 total, just three points off the winner in the event sponsored by Nokia and aimed at fostering camaraderie among the golfers from the different villages in Metro Manila.

Magallanes, however, emerged as the A Division champion followed by the 649 of Corinthian. Tahanan Village ruled B Division with a 649, way ahead of Greenhills 2, which had a 405, while Don Enrique Heights topped the C Division with 646 followed by Valle Verde I at 631.

Aside from Nokia, the world leader in mobile communication, other supporters include the Philippine Airlines, PLDT, Mastercard, Alaxan, ICTSI, Mizuno, Pisanti, National Sports Grill, 357 Boracay and Planet Wines and More Gallery.

Others who scored for Philam Homes were Amadeo Ungson, Arnel Agustin and Max Lopez with their 38's, Richie Lazaro and Raul Regalado with a pair of 37's, Rodolfo Manuel (35), Bayani Fontanilla Jr. (34), Mon de Vera (31) and Romy Roque (29). Arnold David did not count with his 25.

In the individual gross competition, former jungolfer Boy Blue Ocampo of Valle Verde 1 ruled Group 1 (0-5 handicap) with 54 points; Rodel Mangulabnan of Magallanes in Group 2 (6-10 handicap) with 60 points; Amadeo Ungson of Philam Homes in Group 3 (11-15) with 54 points; Lito Abad of Tahanan Village in Group 4 (16-20) with 43 points; and Romeo Ignacio of Don Enrique Heights in Group 5 (21-25) with 43 points.

The final round of the tournament being staged by Videocom since 1991 started out fine until the heavy rains fell before noon, forcing tournament officials to halt play. Action only resumed an hour later with the last flight coming in just before darkness fell.

Superhorse

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

MILLIONAIRE racehorse "Wind Blown," the pride and champion galloper of sportsman Hermie Esguerra, will be aiming for an unprecedented third straight victory in the Presidential Gold Cup race next month after his stirring back-to-back win in the San Miguel Beer-Marho Breeders' Cup last Sunday at the rain-soaked Santa Ana Park oval.

"Magaling talaga," said the proud owner from Bulacan. "He's really a true champion," added Esguerra, stressing that "Wind Blown" won the 2,050-meter classic despite losing a shoe in the muddy track.

"The best horse I've ever bred," said Sandy Javier, the Breeders' Cup winningest breeder with 13 victories to his credit in this 7th annual racing festival held under the auspices of the prestigious Metropolitan Association of Race Horse Owners headed by Putch Puyat, third man of the so-called Marho Big 3.

"Wind Blown" (Hazm-Wind in my Hair) has been invited to take part in next month's Hong Kong international race which stakes a paycheck of HK$18 million (roughly P121 million), but Esguerra politely turned down the Hong Kong offer, saying their priority is the country's annual Presidential Gold Cup.

***

KNEE-JERK REACTION. Here's the continuation of my last piece on Romy Ribaño, sec-gen of the Philippine Olympic Committee, who said, "me and my wife, together with Messrs. Dayrit and Ramos and their wives, went to Busan as offical guests of OCA (Olympic Council of Asia) during the Asian Games," adding, "The cars we used were provided to us by BAGOC (Busan Asian Games Organizing Committee) as guests of OCA. These cars are not for the athletes, who were provided shuttle buses by BAGOC to transport them from the Athletes Village to the training/competition venues and back."Wives as guests of chaperons are just convenient excuses to justify their joining the delegation. With regard to the cars used by the wives, this irritant would not have happened if the wives were not there. Sports in the Philippines will not make any headway if our sports leaders will not change their character and their attitude. Open any newspaper these days and you'll read stories of skullduggery in sports; of junkets and conflicts far more sinister than the sins committed by sports leaders and their non-performing associations. Need I say more?

Dartfest Nov. 22-24

THE COUNTRY'S top darters will take center stage on Nov. 22-24 with the staging of Robson's Darterong Pinoy 2002, a P150,000 event at Pearl Plaza along Quirino Avenue, Parañaque City. The event, sponsored by Casino Filipino, Beer na Beer, Sporthouse and supported by Cocolife, Icarus Shirts, Chili Grass Advertising and Super Image Graphics Inc. is organized by National Dart Foundation of the Philippines (NDFP). For inquiries, call Tito Soncuya at 416-9242/372-3541 or Pat Salvador at 889-6794.

SPORTSTV

Compiled by Lorenzo Manguiat

BASKETBALL: NBA - Chicago vs Sacramento, 11 a.m., Solar Sports
GOLF: UBS Warburg Cup 2002, 11 a.m. (r), Star Sports
Tiger Skins Golf 2002, 3 p.m. (r), Star Sports
TENNIS: Masters Cup (Shanghai) Highlights, 5 p.m. (r), Star Sports
POOL: World Pool League 2001, 2 p.m. (r), ESPN
Rack 'Em Up, 4 p.m. (r), ESPN
BOXING: Friday Night Fights 9 p.m. (r), ESPN
WRESTLING: WWE Heat, 10:30 p.m. (r), ESPN
SOCCER: EPL, 7 a.m., Star Sports
Spanish Football League, 9 a.m. (r), Star Sports
Western Union World Football, 1 p.m. (r), ESPN

BLAST FROM THE PAST

TODAY in 1990, Ren-Ren Cayetano scored 318 points to bag the high school individual scoring honors in the RPGA-Nissan interscholastic golf tournament at Valley Golf Club. Also today in 1992, Dan Cruz shot a six-under-par 66 to post a 6-stroke victory over Cassius Casas at the Valley Golf Club.

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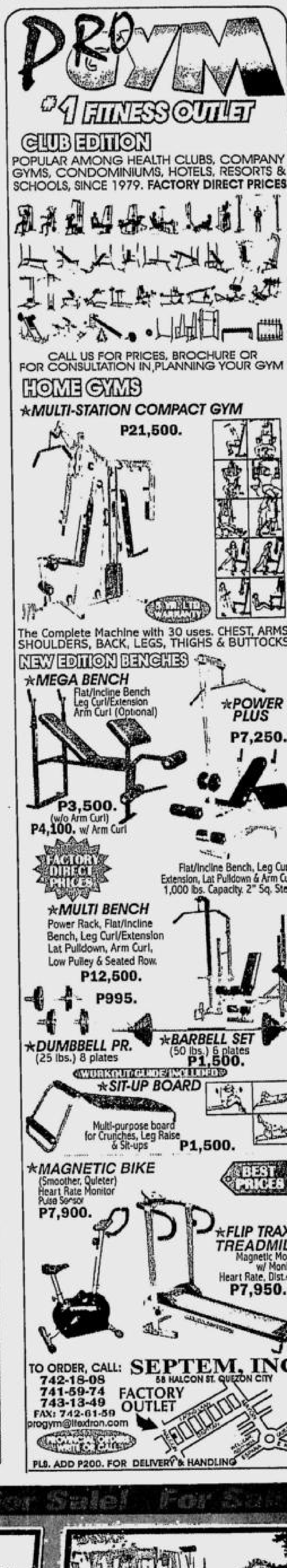

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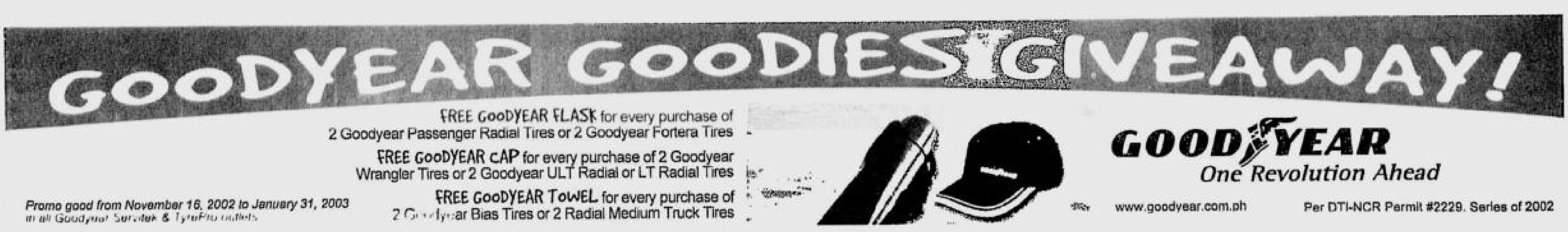

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I have novel ideas for the PBA–Panlilio

By Dennis U. Eroa

FACING sportswriters for the first time since his name surfaced in the elite list of candidates for the post of PBA commissioner, Cristino "Tito" Panlilio didn't blink yesterday while answering questions during the PSA Forum at the Holiday Inn.

"I have novel ideas which can help the league, but it's premature to tell you now. It's a pretty private issue at the moment and I don't want to comment on it until I know exactly what the PBA board wants," Panlilio said.

The 51-year-old Panlilio did not actually come to justify his presence in the PBA list of candidates. He was with fellow Ateneo alumnus Victor Sison to help publicize the inauguration of the Ateneo Sports Hall of Fame.

But 6-foot-2 Panlilio didn't shy away when PSA regulars veered away from the topic and hurled questions regarding the commissionership. He gamely stayed longer than usual after the Forum ended and exchanged views with the scribes.

PANLILIO BETOY JOHNSON

Panlilio's resumé is impressive.

An Ateneo Hall of Famer, this Pampangueño was a member of the 1969 squad which won the 1969 NCAA basketball title. Among Panlilio's teammates were Marte Samson, Francis Arnaiz and Chito Afable. The late Nilo Verona coached the team.

Panlilio, an Ateneo product from grade school up to college before eventually earning his masters degree, was a topnotch banker with PCIB and the Far East Bank. He is now engaged in utilities, sugar milling and business consultancies.

Panlilio said he doesn't consider himself a favorite to become the new commissioner, replacing Jun Bernardino who is retiring in December.

He laughed when he was reminded that Bernardino is also an Atenean–like other candidates Sonny Barrios and fellow Hall of Famer Chito Narvasa.

"I am not giving myself false hopes. I'm just a candidate and Sonny's the top bet. He's a veteran and most qualified for the job," said Panlilio.

Others being considered for the job are Elmer Yanga, Rey Gamboa and Noli Eala.

Eala facing adultery raps

By Agnes E. Donato

A SPORTSCASTER has been accused of adultery by the husband of a woman the sportscaster had allegedly impregnated.

The accused is lawyer Jose Emmanuel "Noli" Eala, married and a Viva Television sportscaster for the PBA games.

Eala's fellow respondent is Irene Moje, a commercial model. Their listed address is 11th Street, New Manila, Quezon City.

They were charged before the QC Prosecutor's Office yesterday by Joselano Guevarra, Moje's husband.

Guevarra said that he started to have suspicions about his wife's relationship with Eala only months after they got married on Oct. 7, 2000.

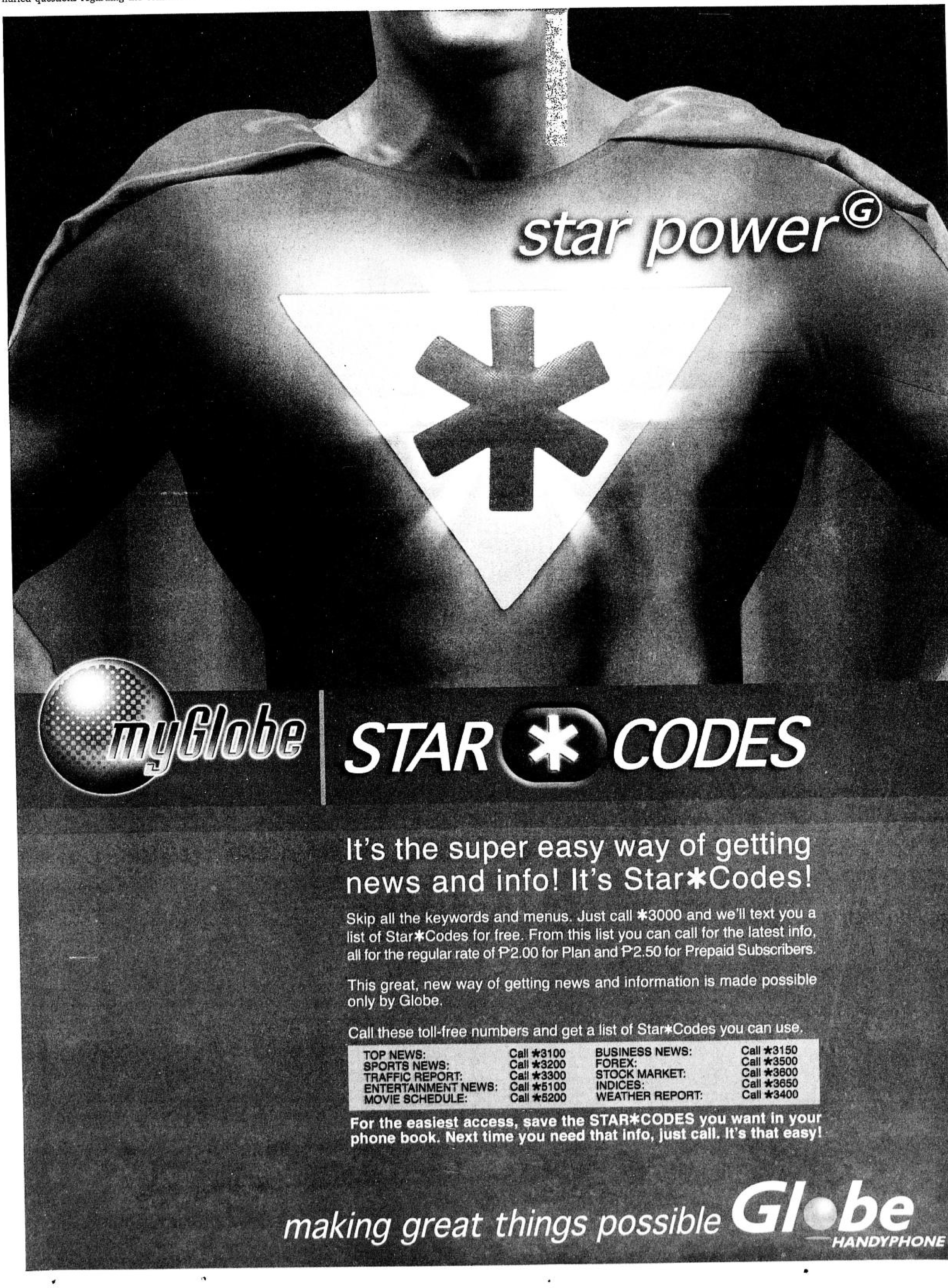
Guevarra said his wife introduced Eala to him as "her friend."

Guevarra said that during the first quarter of 2001, Moje would frequently receive phone calls from Eala.

Guevarra said his wife would next come home very late in the night–if "she came home at all.

"When I asked about her whereabouts, she usually ex-

EALA/ A21



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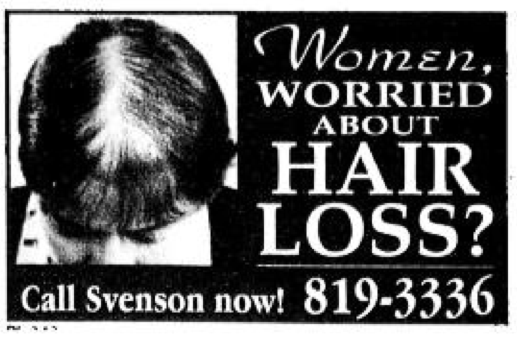

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Show of force against Atienza

By Jerome Aning

IN A SHOW of force, environment groups and politicians yesterday went to the Arroceros Forest Park in Manila to save the only bird-watching site in the city from Mayor Lito Atienza, who wants to erect a building in the park.

The environmentalists and politicians said the park is one of the last "oxygen lungs" of the capital and should be preserved.

"Anyone who tries to build on this beautiful park would have to be quite numb," said Department of Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Heherson Alvarez.

"This place can still serve an educational purpose even if it remains a park, by showing our youth and the public in general how to take care of our environment," he added.

Atienza, who is in Thailand, plans to build the office of the city school superintended and a teachers' dormitory on the site and has vowed not to touch the trees there as much as possible.

He has maintained that the park belongs to the teachers because it was bought with the city's educational fund. He declined to attend yesterday's gathering but had sent a band and food for the guests, according to Tina Testa, organizer of yesterday's event.

The occasion marked the launching of a partnership between park developer Winner Foundation and Senator Loren Legarda's Luntiang Pilipinas Foundation.

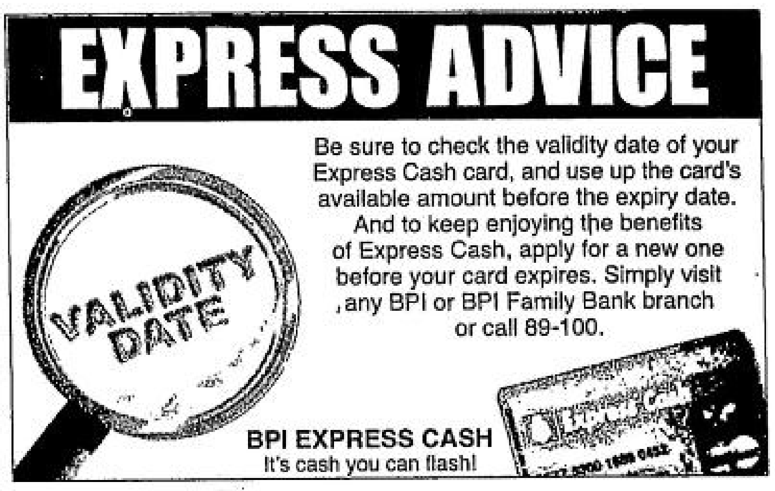
Winner president Regina Roces-Paterno said they were forced to enter into the partnership because City Hall does not give them support to maintain the park. She said the park has only one gardener and does not have any watchman to guard against litterbugs and vandals who peel the barks off the trees for medicinal purposes.

Paterno said Winner is planning to gradually open the park to the public—twice a month, at least—so that the people could appreciate it.

The 2.1-hectare park was turned over to Winner in 1993, in accordance with an agreement signed between the group and then Mayor Alfredo Lim.

The sale of the lot, which was owned by the Landbank of the

SHOW/ A28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Ex-Comelec official cleared in Cinco slay

By Jerome Aning

A MANILA city prosecutor cited insufficient evidence when she cleared former Commission on Elections official Ma. Angelina Matibag of the murder of her predecessor Velma Cinco last year.

Assistant City Prosecutor Raymunda Cruz-Apolo said she could not indict Matibag for murder and frustrated murder even though Matibag verbally threatened to kill Cinco, as overheard by several witnesses.

"These threats by itself (sic) are not sufficient to establish her culpability in the killing of Cinco," Apolo said.

Apolo's 10-page ruling was dated Oct. 1, but copies of the ruling were made available to reporters only yesterday.

"The threats will only provide a single circumstance but only to establish motive," Apolo added.

The prosecutor said the motive "has become immaterial since the assailants have been identified." She was referring to Conrado Robles and Bernardo Pangilinan, the alleged gunman and lookout, respectively.

EX-COMELEC/ A28

Fernando wants to revive Metro's ailing railroads

By Leila Salaverria

THE COUNTRY'S ailing railroads will have a new lease on life.

Metro Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando yesterday said that the railways will be rehabilitated and developed as commuter trains, and extended to Malolos, Bulacan to decongest the densely populated metropolis.

"The railways would be developed as commuter trains," Fernando told the INQUIRER yesterday. "They would be faster and cheaper, and this would entice people in Metro Manila to live in the nearby provinces because it would be easy to go to the city."

Fernando, who met with the President in Malacañang on Monday, said the MMDA and the Philippine National Railways Corp. will form part of the coordinating body that will oversee construction and rehabilitation of the railroads from north to south.

He said the new north-bound railroads will begin in Caloocan City and end in Malolos, Bulacan and will pass through the various towns.

For the southern part of Luzon, the existing railways going to Bicol will be rehabilitated, and new tracks will be built.

He also said that the new railroad tracks would eventually be connected to Light Rail and Metro Rail transit lines to be built in the northern part of Metro Manila.

Fernando said he expects the railroad project to be completed in two years.

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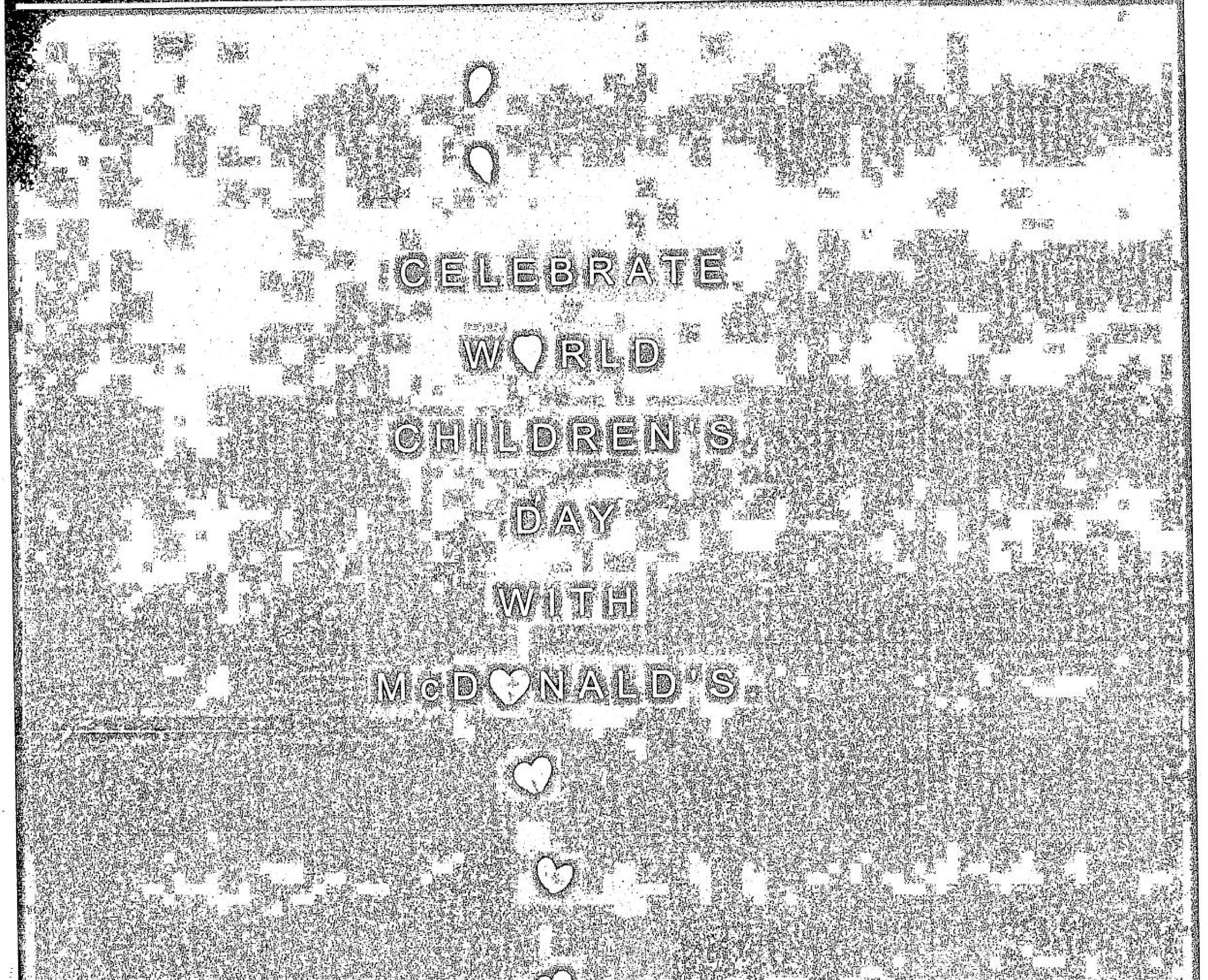
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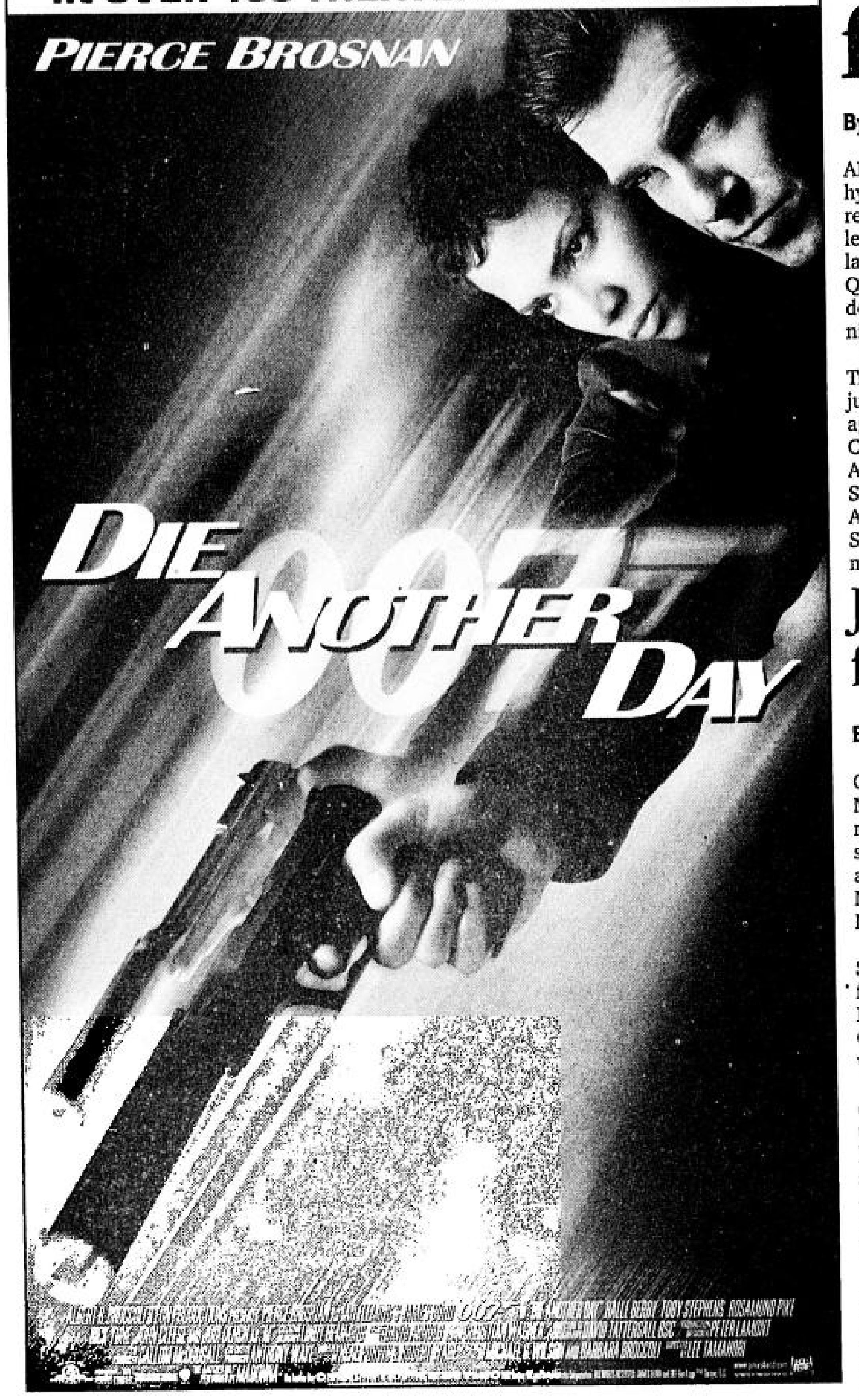
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QC shabu lab suspects freed due to technicalities

By Agnes E. Donato

AFTER generating much hype, the 10 suspects arrested last July 18 for allegedly operating a shabu laboratory in Xavierville, Quezon City, have been ordered released due to technicalities.

A Quezon City Regional Trial Court judge yesterday junked all the charges filed against suspects Jimmy Chua, Man Chuck Li, Willy Ang, Tom Chua, Lai Nar Li, Sam Li Chua, Concepcion Andohon, Jessilyn Lamosa, Sally Ong and Jamil Maramanay.

"The law may be harsh and hard, but it is the law," said Judge Emilio Leachon Jr. "The Machiavellian theory that the 'end justifies the means' does not find application to the case at bar.

"The provision of the Constitution and the laws must be followed and applied at all cost; otherwise, chaos and anarchy will prevail."

In a six-page resolution dated Nov. 15, Judge Leachon reasoned that it was the executive judge of the QC RTC, and not of the Manila RTC, who should have issued the search warrants for the raid as it had primary jurisdiction over the places to be searched.

Leachon also refuted police authorities' argument that it was "not uncommon" for law enforcers to apply for search warrants from courts outside those which have territorial jurisdiction over the place to be raided. He said this had no basis in law.

He added that when they applied for a search warrant in the Manila court, the police should have stated that it was doing so as a precaution to safeguard their operation from possible leakages.

The judge explained that no probable cause was established to back the issuance of the search warrant.

Leachon maintained that informant Robert Sanchez, who claimed that he was a houseboy of suspects Jimmy Chua and Sally Ong, had not been questioned thoroughly enough to establish the truth behind his claim.

He added that because of government's failure to present Sanchez in court, "the court is constrained to accept the proposition (of the defense) that he is fictitious and non-existent."

Judge dismisses sex raps filed against Dusit GM

By Leila Salaverria

CITING insufficient evidence, a Makati City prosecutor has dismissed the attempted rape and sexual harassment charges filed against the Japanese General Manager of the Dusit Hotel Nikko.

Asst. City Prosecutor Imelda Saulog said the complaint of a former physical therapist of Clark Hatch Fitness Center against Chiyuki Fujimoto does not hold water.

The physical therapist has accused Fujimoto of stroking her thighs and buttocks after pulling her toward him during a massage session inside the general manager's room. She also claimed that Fujimoto took out his organ and said he wanted to put it into her.

The attempted rape charges were dismissed because Fujimoto did not perform other acts to show that he had the intention of sleeping with the physical therapist, according to the prosecutor.

"Respondent's act of pulling complainant's arms without performing any further act does not suffice to constitute the force or violence that is required under the law," she read.

Saulog also called Fujimoto's alleged stroking of the complainant's thighs and buttocks "a silly whim."

The prosecutor also dismissed the sexual harassment charge because the incident did not take place in a "work-related or employment environment."

"The said law penalizes the commission of the acts enumerated thereon in a work-related or employment environment," the resolution read. "The fact that the firm where the complainant works is a tenant of Dusit Hotel Nikko does not place this case within the purview of the law."

The complainant's lawyer Ana Cristal-Tenorio said she would file a motion for reconsideration even as she criticized Saulog's resolution, saying it was "absurd" and "unexpected."

NBI men nab doc for abortion

By Philip C. Tubeza

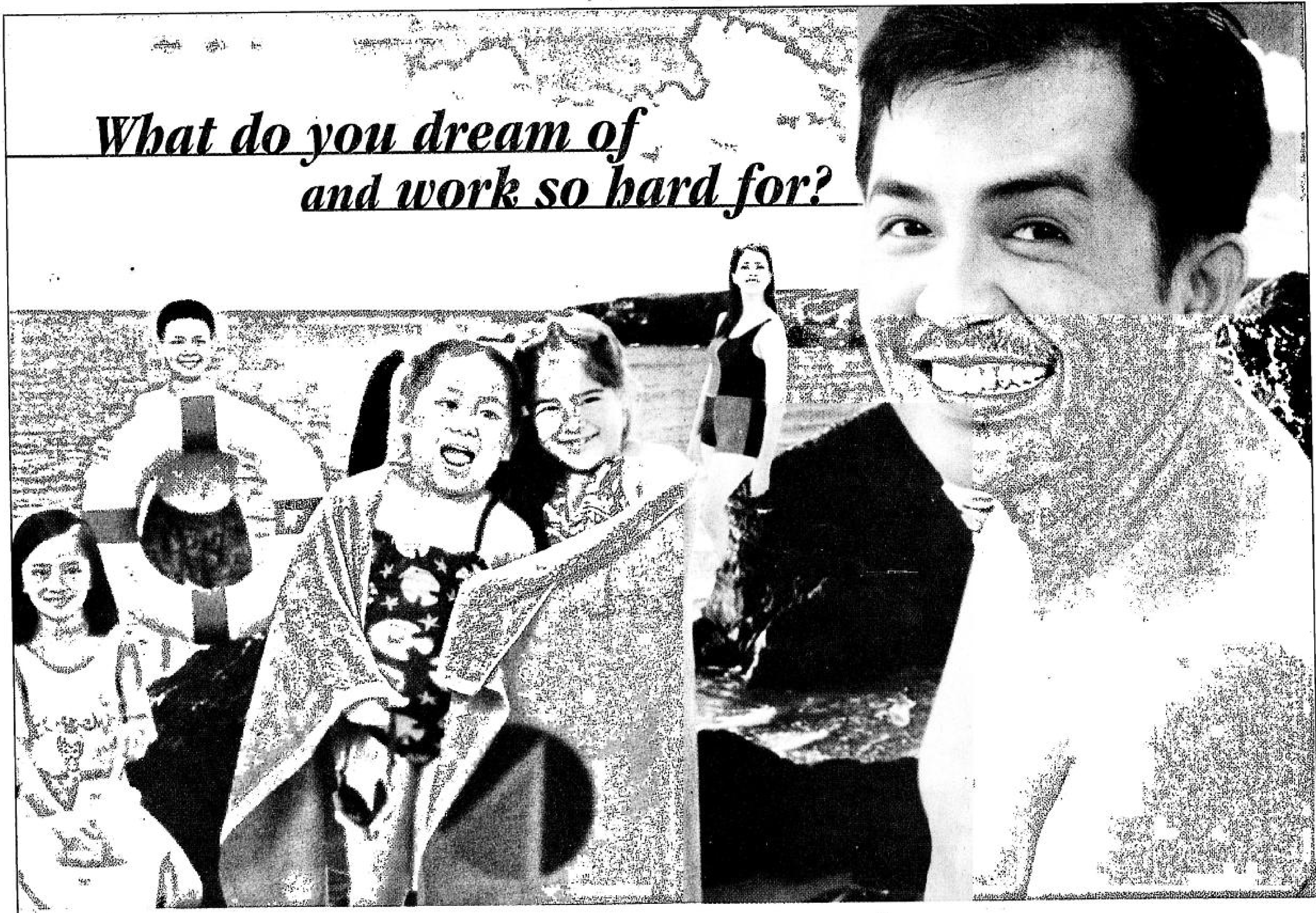
AGENTS of the National Bureau of Investigation on Wednesday arrested Venancio S. Portugal Jr., 52, of Diliman, Quezon City in Makati as he was about to perform an abortion on a patient.

The arrest came after one of Portugal's patients, who was four months pregnant, filed a complaint against the suspect, an alleged doctor, said NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco.

The victim said she went to Portugal's clinic at Valero Plaza Condominium in Makati to have a medical check-up.

She said that after examining her, Portugal told her to have an abortion and explained to her that she would eventually suffer a miscarriage. She said Portugal told her to prepare P25,000 for his fee and P2,000 for the anaesthesia. After the check-up, the woman experienced abdominal pain and decided to ask the NBI for help.

NBI-National Capital Region Chief Edmund Arugay said he ordered an entrapment operation against Portugal who was nabbed just as he was about to begin the operation in his clinic.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No featherweight flight for Pacquiao now

BARE EYE

Recab Trinidad

HE OWNS a big, awesome knockout punch. He has a heart as big as Davao.

Manny Pacquiao has all the right in the world to shoot for the star.

Sorry, but the country's lone reigning world boxing champion will have to momentarily shelve his plan of crashing the exclusive international featherweight fraternity due to a total lack in immediate opportunity.

Remember how Pacquiao had asked for Marco Antonio Barreira, after the tall, talented foreigner had disposed of tough Johny Tapia?

This dare was followed by local claims that, pound for pound, punch for punch, WBC featherweight king, Eric Morales, who had just beaten Paulie Ayala, would be a more ideal foe for Pacquiao.

***

Well, latest word from the world boxing community is that neither Barreira nor Morales is interested in Pacquiao, hands-down the hottest Pinoy sports treasure.

As could be expected, all developments now point to a third yours-or-mine fight between Barreira and Morales for the undisputed world featherweight kingship.

The Associated Press yesterday said "there doesn't seem much else left for Morales and Barreira, who showed in a pair of fights this month that there's a big gap between them and the rest of the featherweight out there."

Said the skillful, fine-featured Morales after his last Sunday's championship bout: "If the HBO wants a third fight and pays me enough there will be a third fight."

Morales and Barreira have fought twice, with each winning one close decision.

Those who had witnessed both combats swear the two decisions could have gone either way.

Of course, both the Morales and Barreira camps know fully well that a great junior featherweight (122 pounds) by the name of Manny Pacquiao exists.

Ted Lerner, commissioned by Ring Magazine to rush a piece on Pacquiao says the power-punching native of GenSan is very much in demand out in the United States, they just go crazy over his raging style of clapping his gloves before moving in for the kill.

However, there's no single mention of Pacquiao when Morales pondered his future.

Instead, the AP said there's also the possibility Morales could fight Prince Nassem Hamed, who Barreira dethroned, or move up a division because he is having trouble making the 16-pound featherweight limit.

***

OK, his dream featherweight flight is out but Pacquiao is being besieged by offers to defend his IBF 122-pound title.

There are twin possibilities of Pacquiao fighting either at Subic Bay or in Saipan, reports fight chronicler Nick Giongo of Today.

His handlers are also waiting for word from their US-based marketing man if Pacquiao would next be fighting in Las Begas.

Yes, a US outing again. Knowing Pacquiao, he would persist on breaking into the exclusive featherweight backyard being ruled by Barreira and Morales.

Pacquiao, no doubt, has the needed punch and the great heart.

But the biggest question is where to get the money to lure either Morales or Barreira, whose asking price has just soared past the $1 million mark.

Finally, the best advice for the restless Pacquiao comes from lawyer-sportsman Rudy Salud who says Manny would do well to first test the featherweight waters by trying maybe a couple of non-title fights in the division.

You're right, says Mr. Salud, founding sec-gen of the WBC, Pacquiao may have the punching power of full-blown lightweight but how much can he take?

He then points to the tested truism that a boxer's punching power seldom approximates the quality of his chin.

Then comes the mention of Pacquiao's twin knockout loses when he was still a flyweight.

MIAA wants Congress to mediate tax dispute

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE MANILA International Airport Authority is asking Congress to intervene in its raging dispute with the Pasay and Parañaque local governments over multi-million taxes.

MIAA general manager Edgar Manda on Monday said that Congress should amend the Local Government Code and ease out the provision lifting the realty tax exemption of government-owned and controlled corporations like the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

Citing the provision, the Court of Appeals had junked MIAA's tax exemption petition.

"In other countries, airports are much more developed because they enjoy autonomy," Manda told the INQUIRER.

"It's only in the Philippines that airports are seen as cash cows."

Manda said an airport's income should directly go to its management for the maintenance and improvement of services and facilities.

"Instead of helping us, people are ganging up on us," he said, referring to the twin tax disputes and the controversy surrounding the Naia Terminal 3.

The Pasay and Parañaque governments have scored separate victories over the MIAA in their bid to collect a combined tax liability of about P1.7 billion from the airport.

The Court of Appeals has upheld in separate occasions the city governments' right to tax the MIAA, clearing the way for the sale of the NAIA through public auction.

Bodies of hogtied women found in Las Piñas

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE HOGTIED bodies of Irenita Agito, 68, and her long-time housemaid, Natividad Centino, 57, were found on Monday already in an advance stage of decomposition in their house in Barangay Pulanglupa Dos, Las Piñas City, police said.

The two were believed to have been killed about five days ago by the family driver, known only as Dodong.

Neighbors of the two women discovered the bodies because of the stink coming from their house on Jasmine Street in Vergonville Subdivision, said Las Piñas police chief Senior Supt. Armando Pineda.

He said Agito's house had been locked and had been dark since last week, and their neighbors decided to enter the house at about 9 p.m. Monday. They found the hogtied bodies of Agito and Centino, inside the toilet of the dirty kitchen, police said.

The neighbors told police that the last person seen leaving Agito's house was the driver Dodong in the victim's Mitsubishi Galant car. They said he appeared to be in trouble and left in a hurry. Dodong also lived in Agito's house.

Ex-Comelec...

From page A25

Robles was tagged as the triggerman by Cinco's sister Marian Sabarre Jayme.

National Bureau of Investigation agents arrested Robles in Batangas a few days after Cinco was ambushed and killed on Nov. 20, 2001.

Apolo also ordered the filing of murder and frustrated murder charges against Pangilinan.

In her ruling, Apolo also cleared Matibag's friend Rudolfo Fortich, a former Comelec agent.

Cinco, Comelec education and information director, was on board a red Kia Pride with her son Carlo and her sister Jayme when gunmen riding a motorcycle attacked them on Pedro Gil Street in Sta. Ana, Manila, on Nov. 20, 2001.

Cinco was killed, while her son survived the attack, according to police reports.

Show of force...

From page A25

Philippines, was approved by then President Fidel Ramos, whose wife Amelita was honorary chair of Winner.

The lot was purchased for P60 million, which came from Manila's education fund.

Testa said that even if the property was bought with the city's educational fund, it was bought to serve as a forest park and should remain so.

A total of 3,500 trees—including balete, acacia, kamagong, narra, teak, mahogany, eucalyptus, golden shower, fire trees, neem, banyan and India rubber trees, as well as various fruit-bearing trees—have been planted and nurtured by Winner since 1993.

There are also about 125 trees, some of which are over a century old, that were already there before the park was created, Paterno said.

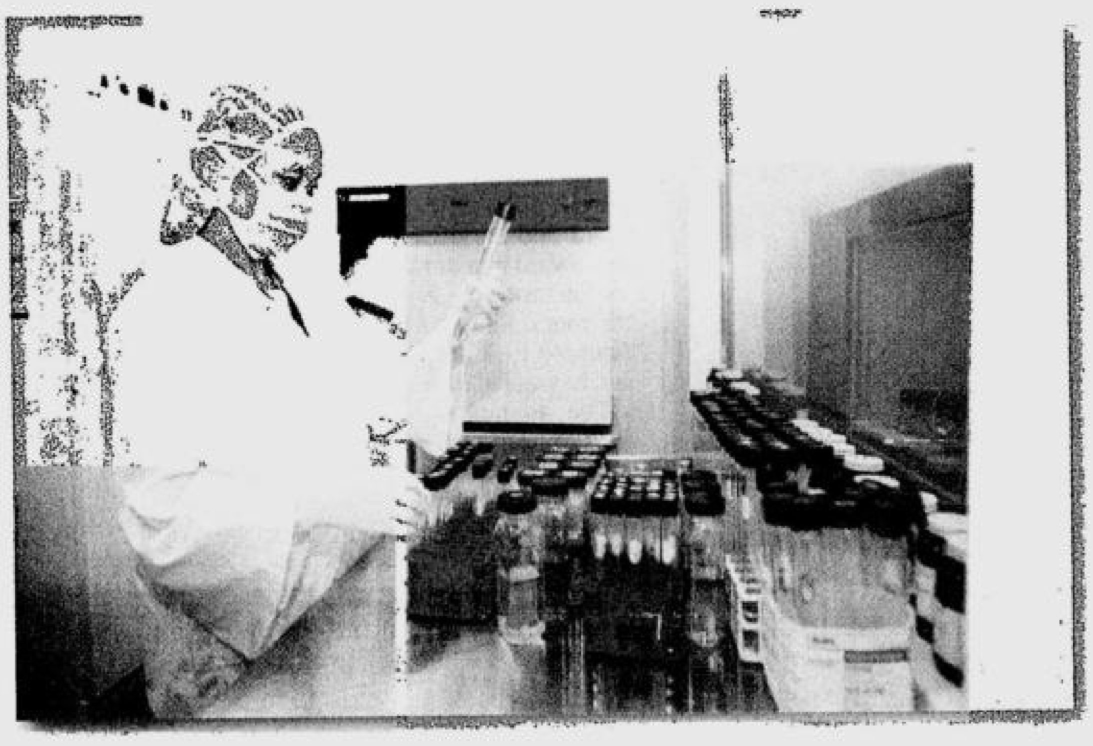
The DENR has also donated 25 pairs of rare trees to the park.

Testa said the conservationists are planning to have the park declared historical, since it was part of the Spanish-era Chinese community of Parian.

Chances are, this little-known life-saving drug
has saved the life of someone you know...
or even your own.

What in the world is an 'injectable'?

The ampule featured in the picture above is also known as an injectable. Most people would probably not know what an injectable is. However, for the medical profession, injectable is just an everyday term applied to drugs used during emergency, life-saving procedures. It includes formulations such as penicillins and its derivatives. It is truly an everyday item in hospitals and very indispensable. It is also quite expensive up until the passage of the Generics Act. What most people are not also aware of is that injectables are now more affordable because these are now available as generic drugs.

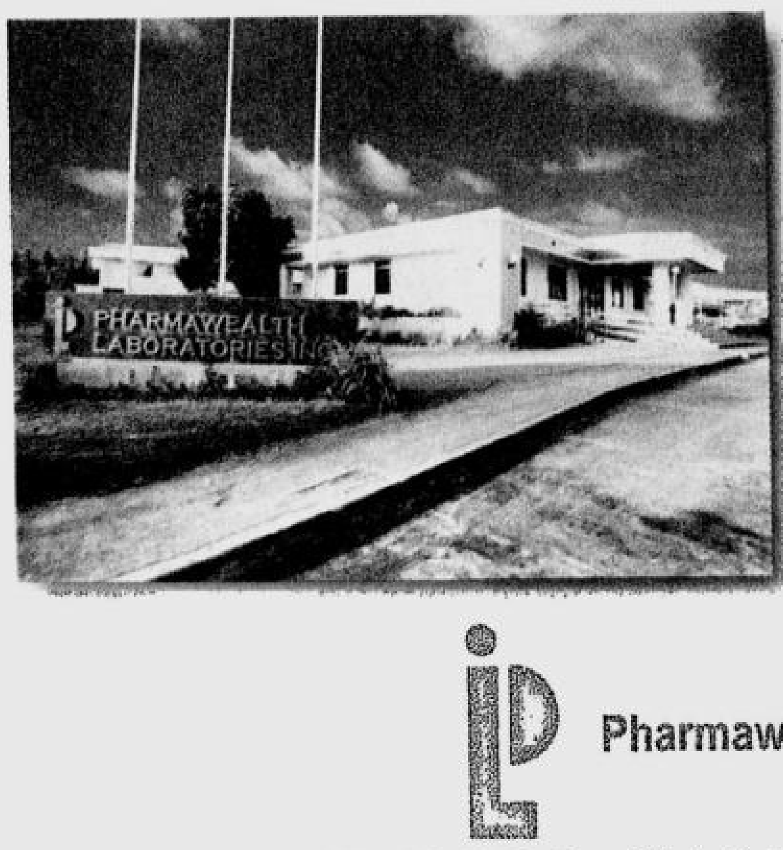


A man with a vision

Having seen a young man die of stab wounds because he was too poor to buy medicines that could have saved his life, Dr. Ferjenel Biron, a doctor also of humble origins, wished he could change all that. When the government launched its new health policy of helping the poor afford medicines through the Generics Act of 1988, Dr. Biron saw his opportunity to help. He responded to the clarion call of the government by establishing Phil Pharmawealth, Inc. with the aim of offering quality and affordable generic medicines to the public.

A Filipino success story

Phil Pharmawealth started with a small team of five people equipped with daring and a pioneering spirit eager to establish a marketing niche in life-saving injectable drugs. They searched the world over for various manufacturers of quality generic injectables, among others. Their search led them to various countries such as the United States, France, Korea, China, Taiwan, India, Thailand, Malaysia, Australia and Cuba.



Today, the company is the country's leading importer of parenteral products and carries the widest range of formulations including cephalosphorins, penicillins and other derivatives, aminoglycosides, anesthetic agents, antipsychotic agents, bronchodilators and uterine stimulants.

Gearing up for global competitiveness

In April 1998, Dr. Biron established Pharmawealth Laboratories – the country's first multi-facility injectable pharmaceutical plant. It is envisioned to prepare the country for global competitiveness in the medical arena. A world-class, state-of-the-art facility, Pharmawealth Laboratories has been issued the prestigious Certificate of Good Manufacturing Practice,among the 17 local pharmaceutical manufacturers that have passed the stringent standards of the World Health Organization. At present, the facility manufactures powder injectables and has become the leading producer of antibiotic preparations such as amoxicillin trihydrates.

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Muse and music maker

Q & A

AT 8 tonight at the Cultural Center of the Philippines, Musical Theater Philippines, the company founded by Celeste Legaspi and hubby Nonoy Gallardo with Girlie Rodis, will stage "Musicat Music," a concert showing excerpts of the company's productions through the years. From "Katy" to the recent revival of "Alikabok," Musicat has been dedicated to the creation and production of original Filipino musicals.

Celeste believes their musicals have the capacity to motivate, encourage, educate and offer excellent standards of entertainment, especially for today's youth.

Their financier? Nonoy Gallardo.

"Musicat Music" will feature a star-studded roster of performers led by Celeste, with Zsa Zsa Padilla, Mitch Valdes, Rachel Alejandro, Nonoy Zuñiga, Ricky Davao, Eugene Villaluz, Ogie Alcasid, Regine Velasquez, Jeffrey Hidalgo, Carla Martinez and Mikee Cojuangco-Jaworski.

Why that concept for a concert *na parang* compilation?

It's really a fundraising opportunity for our company, Musical Theater Philippines. "Musicat Music" was the title suggested by Nonoy (Gallardo). Musicat is the nickname of our theater company, and then music. *Kasi* we can't afford to put anything else there so it's music *lang talaga*.

How many stars do you have?

Ang dami. We're very lucky we're so favored by God. We have 15 stars, we still have another 16 in the ensemble.

What is the show going to look like?

It's a concert review. We have some excerpts, but very minimal. We want to really keep it as a concert.

How long?

Two hours *lang*. The show is directed by Helen Davao. She also directed my "Celeste, Sine Sine" at the Folk Arts Theater and my last concert with the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra. Helen also directed our musical last January, "Sino Ka Ba Jose Rizal?"

What made you decide to do a concert like this at this time of the year?

Because that is the only date Ryan (Cayabyab) and the CCP are free.

How much time did it take to get everybody together?

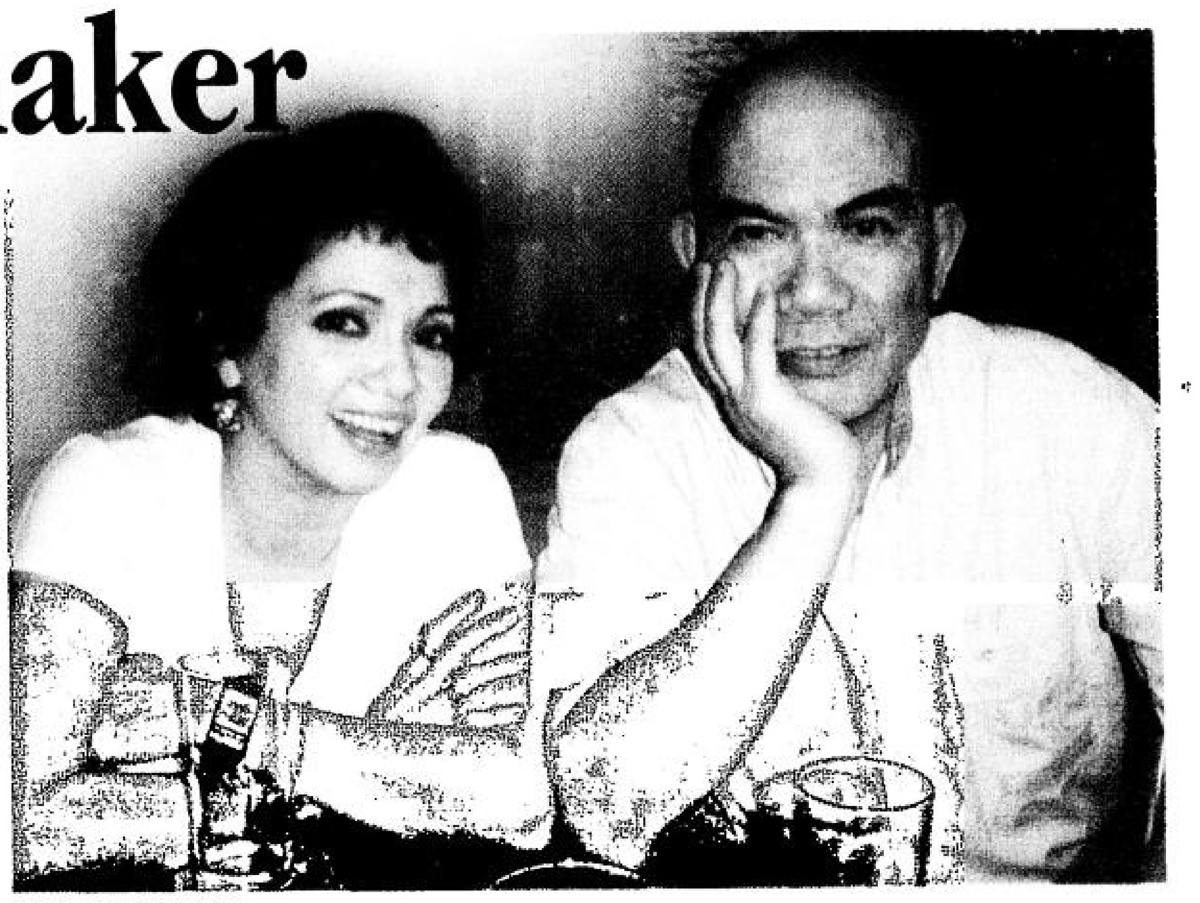
After the "Alikabok" run last August, we already asked the ensemble to stay with us, the stars, shortly after that. *Medyo maramiraming* text messages, but we're very fortunate that most of them said yes.

What was the most successful show you've launched?

"Larawan" was very successful and "Kathy" in 1988, of course.

Rina Jimenez-David gave us a

MUSE/ A30



REAL-LIFE TEAM. Nonoy Gallardo creates the music, while his wife Celeste Legaspi mounts the musicals.

And Waya shines, too

By Marinel R. Cruz

GALLARDO. Wants to make a name for herself.

LIKE most kids born to talented and famous parents, Waya Gallardo wants to get out of her parents' shadows. Her mother is esteemed singer-producer Celeste Legaspi and her father is well-known composer and playwright Nonoy Gallardo.

Although Waya is proud to be tagged as Celeste's daughter, she is now making a conscious effort to create a name for herself.

"I have so much to share to other people," Waya tells the INQUIRER in an interview. "I want to prove that I can do things that will remind the public of me as an artist and not as a daughter of my widely admired parents.".

Waya, 26, is the second in the brood of three brilliant children of Celeste and Nonoy. Miguel, 29, and Clara, 25, are also involved in the arts.

Waya says they may be Celeste and Nonoy's children, but they also have their own persona and respective talents.

Miguel channels all his creative to advertising, while Clara is into drawing and painting.

Waya dabbles in creative writing, specifically, poetry and non-fiction, as well as songs.

"I'm proud of my parents but I also want to be recognized because of my talents," she says.

And even when she performs, Waya wants to

AND WAYA/ A30

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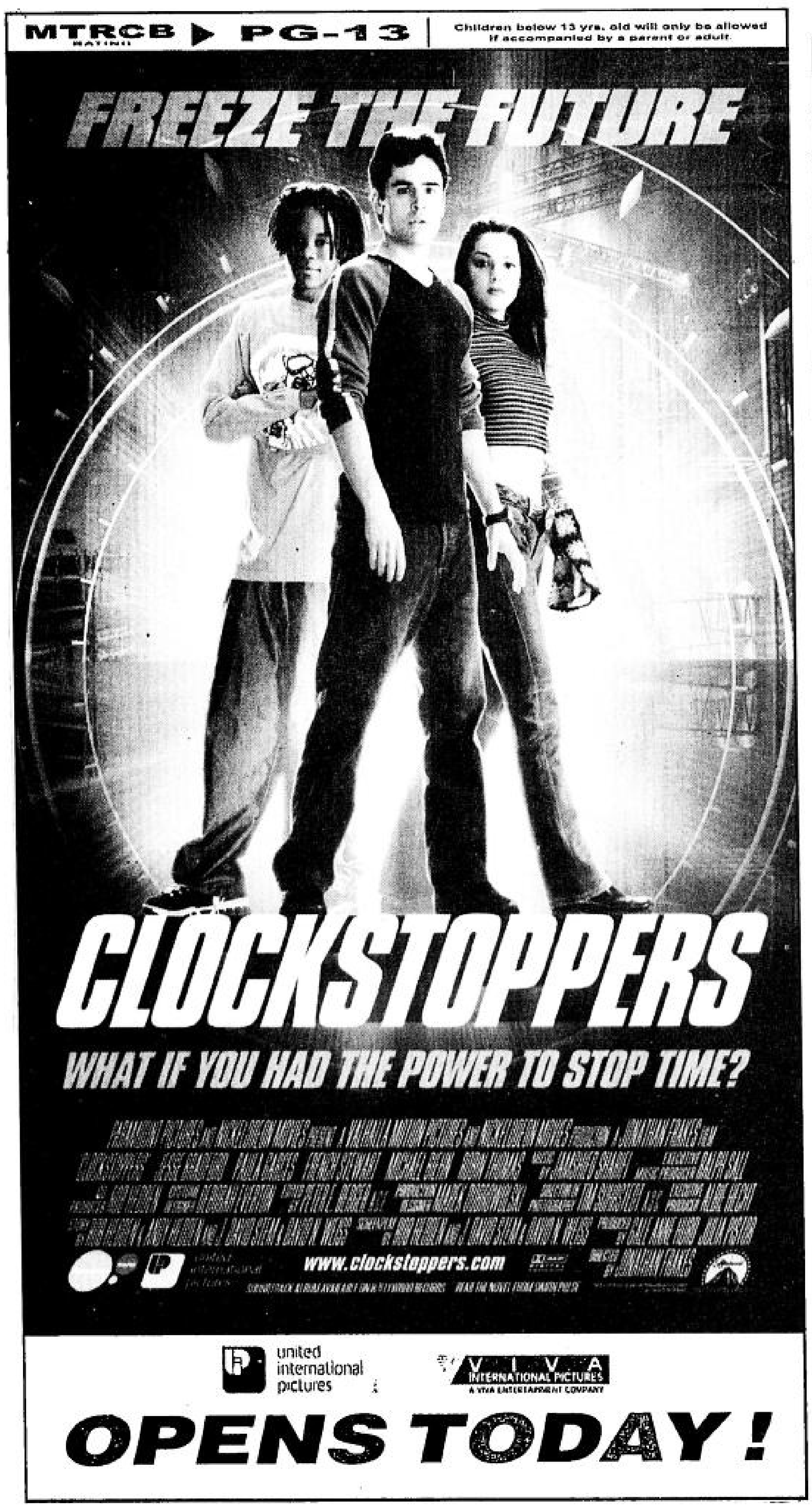

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Muse and music maker

From page A29

wonderful review for "Sino Ka Ba Jose Rizal?" that really boosted our ego.

We also revived "Alikabok" last August.

Tell us about the theater company.

Celeste: It's called Musical Theater Philippines (MTP). Musicat is our nickname. *Ginawa naming* Musicat *kasi sabi namin ni* Girlie (Rodis) *gusto naming maging sikat*.

Nonoy: *Mula nang pinalitan nila ng* Musicat, *gumanda na 'yung kanilang mga* productions.

Celeste: Actually, *'yung* logo *namin may pusa*. Cat lovers *kasi kami ni* Nonoy. (laughs)

How many musicals have you had?

Five, all-original Filipino musicals. Mr. Gallardo wrote "Sino Ka Ba Jose Rizal" and "Sarranggola ni Pepe." Aside from that, financier *namin siya* ni Girlie. We also always pick his brains.

What was the most profitable venture?

Nonoy: *Wala!* (laughs)

Celeste: Shut up! No, that's not true. "Larawan" was profitable. The first run *nga lang. Dun sa* second run *minalas na kami*. I don't know if you recall. Rachel (Alejandro) stepped in for Leah Navarro then Rachel got sick. *Kung baga, 'yung* understudy who already stepped in, *nagkasakit pa*, so we really had to cancel some shows.

Nonoy: "Katy" was very successful.

Celeste: "Kenkoy Loves Rosing" was financially feasible to us. "Sino Ka Ba Jose Rizal" was for the centennial of the death of Rizal so we were sponsored by the City of Manila, Pagcor and the Department of Tourism. That was also financially feasible.

When was MTP formally formed?

It was formed at the time when we did "Kenkoy Loves Rosing" in 1990. That was two years after we did "Katy."

We're raising funds because we would like very much to restage "Katy" next year. We'd plan to audition for an entirely new cast. The only thing we will keep is the music and the libretto and the book.

Are you going to sing in this show ("Musicat Music")?

Yes. I will have a duet with Rachel from "Larawan," another duet with Mitch from "Katy" and a solo from "Katy" titled "Laruan Kong Langit." I played *kasi* Olivia in "Katy" in 1988 and this is Olivia's solo piece. The duet with Mitch is "Minsan Minahal ay Ako."

Girlie: We will use a huge chunk from "Katy."

Celeste: We'll be showing Katy *kasi* as a kid, adult and then Katy as Mitch *na*. We're very excited. We hope to put together the same musicians who played for us in 1988.

The group members were with the UP Jazz Ensemble before that they're with the Ugoy-Ugoy Band.

Also, we're restaging "Alikabok" at Insular Life in Alabang with a new lead because Cris (Villonco) left for the States. We have to find another Bising.

How is the live concert scene?

You're asking me? I haven't done concerts for a long time.

From your viewpoint as a watcher?

Celeste: Girlie would know.

Girlie: It's alive and well. It's picking up again *kasi* nag-back out *ang maraming* foreign artists *dahil sa* bombing. *Hindi naman natatakot ang mga* Filipino *manood ng* concerts.

Celeste: The last concert we saw was the New York Philharmonic. *Punung-puno* ang venue and everybody looked rich.

Girlie: The last concert I saw was Ogie Alcasid's. The Araneta Coliseum was packed to the rafters. Rachel's concert with Geneva at Music Museum was *punung-puno din*.

How about singing again, more often?

Celeste: Tomorrow I'm recording the Chinese, Italian, Spanish and French versions of Martin's song for the family, for Universal Records.

Nonoy: *May bago kang* title, the Multi-lingual Diva. (laughs)

(To Nonoy) You're not writing anymore, why?

Hindi na kumakanta si Celeste *at wala na akong pagkuhaan ng* ideas.

Celeste: Hobby *lang naman n'ya 'yun eh*.

Saang idea nanggaling ang "Saranggola?"

Nonoy: *Marami*, actually. I wrote that song after Martial Law was declared. It's an expression of my Martial Law experience. There are many hidden messages in that song.

If you would make a musical out of your life together what would it be like?

Nonoy: Boring yun! Wala masyadong away eh

Celeste: I'm sorry but it will have to be X-rated

What is Celeste to your songwriting? If she has any role at all?

When I wrote "Jose Rizal," she terrorized me. *Kinulong nya ako sa* study. *Hinahatiran lang ako ng pagkain* for three weekends. We were on a strict deadline at that time.

Celeste: We changed the music 100 percent. With a month to go, *kinandado ko siya sa* study room. *Ang sungit!*

Nonoy: *Kasi naman* originally lyrics *lang ang gagawin ko. Hindi nila nakasundo 'yung* composer so *pinasa sa akin*.

Celeste: He wrote 45 melodies. I threw away five.

(To Nonoy) Will you agree to write another musical?

Celeste: Yes! *'Di ba* yes? You want to write McArthur, *'di ba*?

Nonoy: When I retire *siguro*.

Why (Douglas) McArthur?

I want to write from the point of view of a Filipino. *Nung lumalaki kasi ako*, hero *'yun* so *magandang isulat*.

Celeste: Before, we thought of doing a musical on Mao Tse-tung, but from the point of view of Filipinos who got stranded in China during Martial Law. One couple stranded there were the parents of Manining Miclat. *'Yung anak nila, si* Banawe, *naging* cast *namin sa* "Fire, Water, Woman" and choreographer *sa* "Alikabok."

I haven't really read or heard your songs but do you ever write straight lyrics? Ang hirap kasing unawain ng lyrics ng mga kanta mo.

Nonoy: *'Yung* "Saranggola" *lang 'yun*.

Celeste: He also wrote "Tuliro." *Siguro ganun siya talaga pa*-deep.

What do you do on Friday nights when you go out?

Nonoy: *Kumakain. Umaalis talaga kami para manood ng* movie, *nauuwi na lang sa kain*.

Celeste: We try out new restaurants. The last movie we saw was "Brotherhood of the Wolf." *Ang ganda!* It's a French movie with an animé influence.

What do you fight about?

Nonoy: Oh we fight! *Usually kapag hindi niya ako naririnig*.

Celeste: Excuse me, *ikaw dyan ang bingi. Hindi ako*.

Is your daughter Waya a full-time artist now? (*See related story*)

Yes, and a full-time writer, too.

How long have you been married?

Thirty-one years *na*. Miguel is older than Waya. Miguel is the eldest. He's turning 30 on Christmas.

How is it like to be married to the same artist for 31 years?

Celeste: I don't want to be mushy here. I keep telling Nonoy that I feel very lucky *kasi mabuti na lang* I still like him after all these years (laughs). When the children have grown, *talagang kayo na lang dalawa*. Then it's really time to face each other and ask yourselves *kung 'tama ba yung ginawa ninyo?'* Apparently, *hindi naman ako nagkamali*.

Nonoy: *Nakasanayan na eh*. (laughs)

If you would make a musical out of your life together what would it be like?

Nonoy: *Boring yun! Wala masyadong away eh*.

Celeste: I'm sorry but it will have to be X-rated. (To Nonoy) Nonoy, you start telling the truth.

Girlie: Their love story began in the song "Tuliro." That's why she doesn't like to give that song away.

Celeste: Not me! Him! How do I explain that?

Nonoy: I wrote into poetry the things that you blurted out.

Celeste: We were at CCP then. *Sinasamahan niya ako sa* rehearsal. We were standing there, on a break, looking at the chandeliers. I told him I was intoxicated by the moment. The next day, he gave me the lyrics. Actually, *niligawan ko siya*. (laughs) *Hindi kasi nagsasabi eh. Nakakainis na!*

Nonoy: *Kasi* I was going to work in Hong Kong. *Hindi na natuloy. Niligawan na ako eh. Sinagot ko naman!* (laughs)

No regrets?

Nonoy: No regrets. *Minsan nagbibiruan kami, "Sana Instik asawa ko ngayon!"* (laughs)

Celeste: You know that first person who told me that the lyrics of "Tuliro" are very special was Bert "Tawa" Marcelo.

Saan nanggaling yung "nagsumayaw ang mga anghel..."

Nonoy: I was just describing the tingling sensation that she said she felt. *Para kang kinikilig*.

Celeste: How about "nagsumigaw bawat himaymay ng aking laman..."

Nonoy: *'Di ba kapag nahipo ka ng minamahal mo*, you get goose bumps?

Celeste: *Ay* excuse me, *si* Bert Marcelo *iba ang pagkakaintindi dun!*

"Kay bilis mo naman matapunan ng ganda ng buwan..."

Nonoy: *Parang ang bilis mo naman ma*-in love.

Celeste: It's true! One moment you're just yourself, the next moment you're in-love and everything has changed.

Nonoy: "Yung natakpan ng ulap ang daan" means you feel like you're walking on air.

Celeste: Ah! That did not come from me, so that must have been how you felt.

Girlie: After 31 years, now it is revealed. (laughs)

Do you get the same intoxication when you perform?

Celeste: Sometimes. It depends *kung maganda ang* connect *sa* audience.

What do you see and feel when you watch her perform on stage?

Nonoy: I'm very critical. *Hindi ko pinapakinggan kung maganda. Tinitignan ko kung ano ang mali.*

Celeste: *Nung bago pa lang akong kumakanta*, I'd ask him, "What do you think of the performance?" He'd tell me, "You should've been like this, should've been like that." Then *aawayin ko siya. Ngayon hindi ko na siya tinatanong*. My kids are my worst critics now. They impersonate me!

Will you stick to Filipino musicals?

We will not adapt. Other companies can do that. We're not interested in adapting.

Nonoy: They tried doing English but failed miserably.

Celeste: "Fire, Water, Woman." Failed miserably. Yes, that's true.

Girlie: *Nanalo tayong* best song for that.

Celeste: That was the music of Louie Ocampo. Perhaps in the future, we'll still make English musicals.

Nonoy: You should always start with Filipino first then you translate. You cannot convey the same emotion using a foreign language.

Celeste: I think we just have to find the right writers.

Do we have enough good writers for plays?

As of now, no. That's why we're developing writers like Waya. We were able to use her in "Alikabok." She re-wrote a lot of stuff in English. It was a very good exercise for her. We also need good and young songwriters.

What's wrong with the not-so-young ones?

Nonoy: *Hindi na maka*-relate.

Celeste: There's nothing wrong with them. It's just that when we're talking about subject matters that are young, they just don't know how to do it. We've really been exerting a lot of effort to work with younger people. *Ibang-iba talaga ang nakukuha naming* results.

In "Alikabok," we used a young set designer, young choreographer and ibang-iba ang dating.

What's your dream production?

Celeste: To restage "Katy." *Madaming bago* actually, *binaon ko muna sa limot dahil wala kaming pera*. But there's this interesting musical that would tell what the future in the Philippines is if *there's no music. The struggle is, ibabalik ang* music. What will Filipinos be like if we don't have music? That's a very interesting premise.

We also wanted to do "Darna" as a musical. *Nagbayad na nga kami ng* royalties *kay* Mrs. Ravelo, *nag*-expire *na lang 'yung* contract *kasi wala kaming makuhang* funds.

Mataray ba si Celeste?

Nonoy: *Mas mataray ako*. (laughs) *Maiksi pasensiya ko sa tanga eh*.

Celeste: *Alam mo, nanay ako eh*. I had to learn patience. I also allow Nonoy to think *na mas mataray siya sa akin*. That's why we're still together. *Mataray ako* when I have to be.

Nonoy: *Kapag mataray siya* cool *ako. Kapag ako mataray, siya ang* cool.

What's the best thing about Celeste Legaspi the artist?

Nonoy: She has always been reluctant to go pop. I don't think her soul wants her to become a pop singer.

Celeste: Oh and what does my soul want?

Nonoy: *Basta* there is always that reluctance to crossover and really be a pop singer.

What's the best thing about Nonoy Gallardo the artist?

Celeste: I think he makes the best lyrics in the Philippines. In the Philippines *lang, ha*. (laughs)

Louie C. Camino, Leah Salterio and Marinel R. Cruz

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And Waya shines, too

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be known for her own style and refuses to ape her popular mother.

"Nobody sings like Celeste Legaspi," Waya insists. "I don't consciously try to be like her."

Waya earned raves for her performance in the revival of the musical "Alikabok," staged last August at the Music Museum. Waya helped revise the script with a creative team for Music Theater Company, a theater outfit that her mom helped build with talent manager Girlie Rodis.

"Alikabok" was inspired by Juan Luna's painting "La Bulaqueña." The musical was set in the 1890s and talked about Bising Vallejo's life in a town called San Rafael, her childhood sweetheart Ignacio and her life as a Katipunera.

It was the musical's subplot, which Waya rewrote. It talked about Anna, a modern-day Balikbayan married to Bising's grandson Greg, who learned a life-altering lesson after she discovered Bising's diary in the dusty old house in San Rafael.

"Anna didn't have any attachment to that house and wanted to sell it," Waya says of her character. "But after reading Lola Bising's diary, her character experienced a transformation."

Waya took up theater at the Philippine High School for the Arts at Mt. Makiling in Los Baños and graduated with a degree in creative writing from UP Diliman.

Waya has already appeared in five stage plays. Aside from "Alikabok," she did a small role in a "Lapulapu" play at the CCP.

"Performing is something I took from my mom, I guess," Waya admits. "Writing poetry and fiction is from my dad."

Though Waya will not perform in tonight's "Musicat Music" at the Cultural Center of the Philippines, she is still very much part of the show because she helped conceptualize and write its script.

GARCIA. "I only dream of what I can achieve."

Eddie Garcia remains a realist

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Leah Salterio

EVEN his colleagues in the industry are amazed how veteran actor-director **Eddie Garcia** has detached himself from perks of stardom. Yet, he has maintained an illustrious show biz career for more than five decades now, with no letup.

The secret of his longevity and his stellar status are simply enviable. Thanks to his versatility, he continues to get good film projects up to this day.

"I treat moviemaking as any other job which pays well," Eddie says. "I don't want to be lured to the trappings of being a celebrity. Acting is just my way to earn a living. The awards come in as a bonus for a job well done."

While he admits that he accepts some projects simply to earn good money, Eddie also welcomes films that call for challenging roles. One time, you see him clowning around with a younger costar in an action-comedy flick. The next, he sinks his teeth in a dramatic role that requires his powerful screen presence.

"I can still do anything even if it's ridiculous, as long as the offers keep coming," Eddie says.

Without a manager to take care of negotiations, Eddie doesn't mind dealing with producers himself.

"I got used to it," he says.

In accepting a project, he considers the role, his costars and the support of his producers if they are willing to promote the film.

Eddie is also considerate enough to accommodate producers who want to have him in the cast of their movies, but with a tight production budget. He accepts the project by lowering his usual talent fee.

"I'm not the only one doing that," Eddie reasons out. "You ask any other star around and you can always talk to them to lower their fees. That way, more local producers can produce films."

For Eddie's two upcoming films for Regal, lady producer **Lily Monteverde** disclosed the veteran actor agreed to a reasonable cut on his usual talent fee.

Eddie plays an anti-hero role in **Joel Lamangan**'s family drama, "Bahid," with a script by **Roy Iglesias**.

Eddie is the vicious, rich and powerful Don Lorenzo Lavares, who uses influence to get what he wants, including women.

Age obviously hasn't seem to slow him down. There was a time when they had to shoot straight for 48 hours for "Bahid," and Eddie didn't mind the long hours of work.

In another Lamangan-Iglesias collaboration, "Mano Po," Eddie is the patriarch of a Filipino-Chinese clan.

"It's not really a very long role," Eddie says of his part in "Mano Po."

Even if he is also an award-winning director—he recently won a trophy for the **Lorna Tolentino** starrer, "Abakada Ina"—Eddie makes it a point not to meddle in the job of who is directing him.

"Unless my director seeks my two-cents worth, I don't contradict him," Eddie says. "The director is the captain of the ship. He has the grasp of the whole film. The job of an actor is simply to take care of his role."

Asked how it is working with Joel Lamangan again after the critically acclaimed "Deathrow" in year 2000, Eddie remarks, "(Joel) is a consummate director. He is very organized and he works fast. He doesn't waste time. He knows what he wants."

After five decades of acting, Eddie insists he never had any dream role.

"I'm not a dreamer," he says. "I'm a realist. I only dream of what I can achieve. I don't dream for the moon. I take things as they are. That way, I will have less frustrations."

Three shows in 24 hours

MARTIN Nievera is simply unstoppable and continues to live up to his "Concert King" tag.

His out-of-town show in Dagupan last Friday drew a record-breaking crowd of 4,000 at the People's Astrodome.

The show's producers— Meme **Monteverde-Tan** and husband **Stephen Tan**—were very pleased with the warm reception accorded to Martin.

The audience gave Martin's every number a deafening applause and at the end of the show, they rewarded him with a standing ovation.

In the audience that night were Meme's mom, Regal Films matriarch Lily Monteverde, talent managers **Dolor Guevarra** and **Douglas Quijano**, who endured the four-hour trip to Manila to lend moral support to the producers.

After the three-hour concert which ended at way past 11 p.m., Martin returned to Manila with his whole production team and musicians.

The next day, he did another record-breaking feat of holding two shows in one day at Onstage in Greenbelt. The matinee and the evening performances capped his successful series in the said venue.

The demand for Martin to be seen by music fans was so strong, that his producers decided to do a matinee show.

It is indeed amazing, if not unthinkable, for an artist to do three full shows in only 24 hours.

But then, Martin Nievera is not just any artist. He is the "Concert King" and he no longer needs to prove it.

One film, two differing classifications

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

THE CINEMA film review group of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines has come out with a "parental guidance needed" advisory for "Harry Potter and Chamber of Secrets," which the MTRCB has classified For General Patronage.

This suggests that MTRCB says it's ok for kids to watch the movie with no supervision, while the CBCP group urges that children be accompanied to the theatres by their parents. In short, the MTRCB's evaluation is more liberal or permissive, depending on how you look at it.

The CBCP's Cinema group is worried about some violent scenes in the movie, as well as huge fantasy characters and several scary sequences, which it feels younger viewers may have problems dealing with, thus the need for parental guidance.

How come the MTRCB didn't regard these elements as potentially problematic for very young viewers? Well, parents of young kids will have to see the movie for themselves to decide which group has evaluated the production more correctly.

For our part, we believe that the problem could have been anticipated, if the MTRCB had more child psychologists among its members.

After all, the main reason why movies are being censored and /or classified here is to protect young viewers from material that's potentially troubling to them, and child psychologists are trained to detect those potentially disturbing instances.

For this reason, we have for a long time now been urging the appointment of more child psychologists to the MTRCB—unfortunately, without much success.

Well, let's hope that this latest "flare-up" opens more people's minds in this regards. That includes Pres. **Arroyo**'s.

More on Rachel Grant

OUR piece on **Rachel Grant** last Saturday has elicited the interest of some readers. They are impressed by the fact that the Fil-Brit actress has snagged the featured role of Peaceful, one of the three new Bond Girls in the latest Agent 007 spy saga,"Die Another Day," which starts its run late this month.

There's word that Rachel may be coming over to grace the film's opening here, so the excitement over her is building up.

People want to know more about Rachel and what it took for her to get such a good role in the latest installment in the world's most successful film franchise. So, we asked around, and got more info on Rachel from our friend, singer-actress-filmmaker **Christine Carlos.**

Christine, a good friend of Rachel's sister, **Angela**, shares that the Grant Sisters mother comes from "a good family in Parañaque." Rachel has a solid background in dance, gymnastics and acrobatics, which is why it wasn't hard for her, once she moved her performing base to London, to be tapped as a body double for **Angelina Jolie** in the hit film, "Lara Croft, Tomb Raider."

Rachel was also one of the hosts of a TV show in London that featured lots of stunts, some of which she herself performed. It's logical, therefore, for her to end up in an action-adventure spy extravaganza like "Die Another Day."

Expectedly, after clinching her role in the new Bond flick, Rachel's stock has risen on the international film scene, and it's entirely possible that she'll be getting increasingly bigger film roles from here on in.

For her part, Angela used to be with the local **Cal Carrie** agency for models, and is a popular talent for commercials. Years ago, she put up ballet school in her lolo's house in Parañaque.

Christine says that Angela is getting married to an Englishman this Nov. 23 "in a castle in Czechoslovakia," and Rachel is expected to attend the wedding ceremony. Christine was also invited, but so sorry, there was no roundtrip plane ticket attached to the invite!

As for the youngest Grant sister, **Rebecca**, her talent lies in the visual arts. More on Rachel soonest!

RX Band Breakout

SIX bands have been chosen finalists in the RX Band Breakout 2002 tilt. Cista (the Cebuano term for guitar) with **Edsel** and **Edwin Trazo, Ronald Pecson** and **Jaime Ricasata.** 33 Project, winner of the regional competition in the south, with **Anthony Feliciano; Andre Jalapit, Michael Cabreros, Christian, Jackie Jalapit, MC Menchavez** and **Jesse Villanueva.**

Sessionroad, from Baguio City, with **Hannah, Chavi, JV, Richard** and **Coy Romawac.** Stonefree with **Reggie Mangubat, Benson Jay Tanoja, Relly Mangubat** and **Miro Valera.**

Silent Sanctuary with **Norman Dellosa, Paolo Legaspi, Allen Alixto,** and **Anjo Inacay.** And Blueketchup with **Emil Mijares, Gomer Sumilhig, Paks Alcantara, Bombie Almendrala, Ronald Dizon** and **Anthony Valderrama.**

Grand finals will be held at 8 p.m. on Nov. 23 at Streetlife Remix, Glorietta 3, Makati. At stake are P50,000, a recording contract with Alpha Records, and exposure on Monster Radio RX 93.1.

Boob-tube booboos

HOST: What was your initial reaction when you were told that you would be in the new program?

Starlet: My initial reaction was, I was a little but shocked!

(We know what you mean!)

***

Host:Were you surprised when the airplane crashed?

Guest: I was very surprised. It was unexpected. After all, it was a very new aircraft that's only 18 or 19 year old!

(How new can you get?!)

***

Host: Why do you like living in the province?

Guest: Because we're so close to nature. We have animals in our yard!

Host: *Talaga? Anong mga animals?*

Guest: *Meron kaming kalabaw at saka bata!*

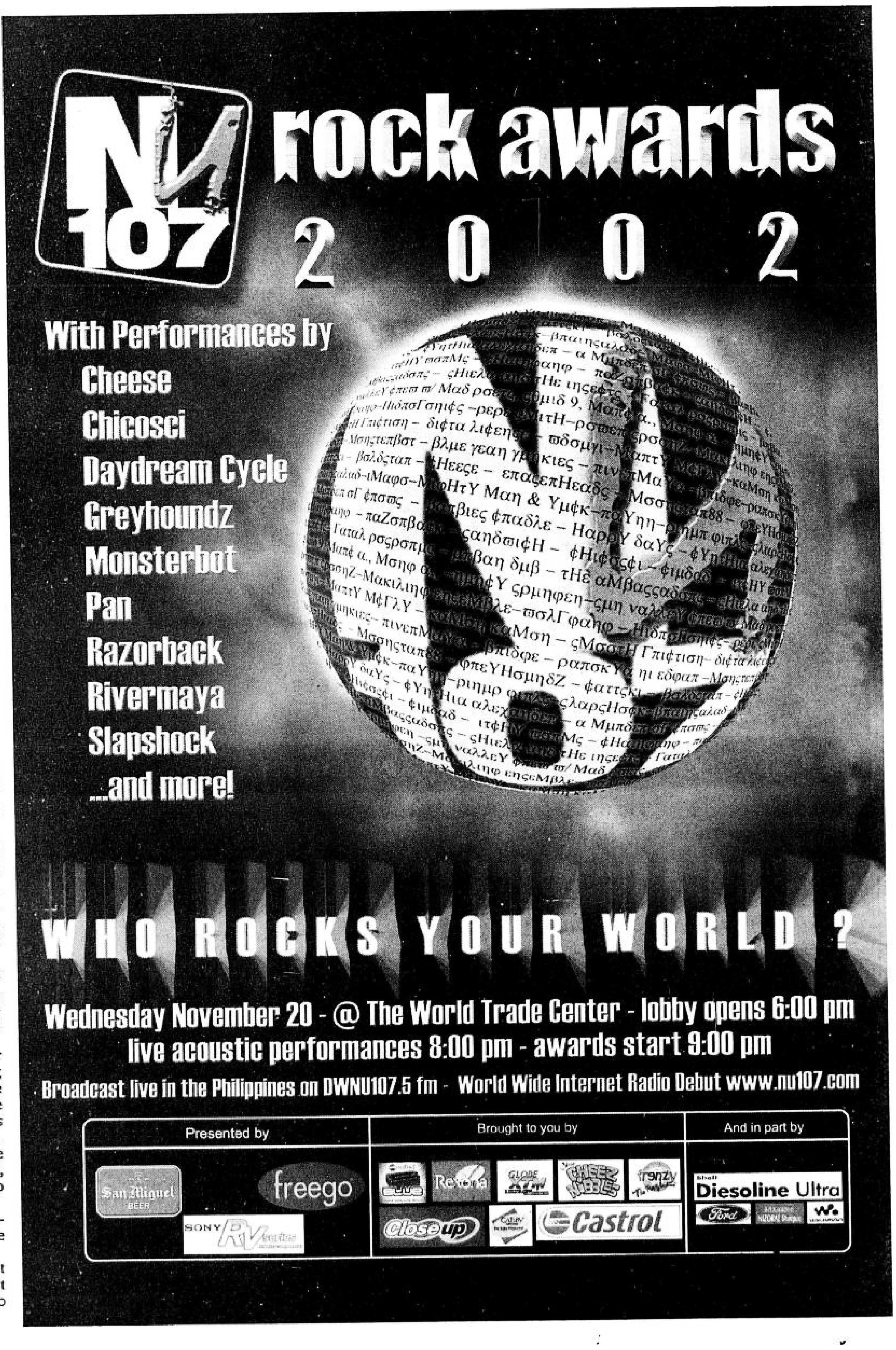
(*Baka, hindi bata!*)

***

Host: Where is the worst traffic jam this morning from what you can see of the area?

Field Reporter: The worst is at the Commonwealth intercession!

(*Ay*, intercession!)



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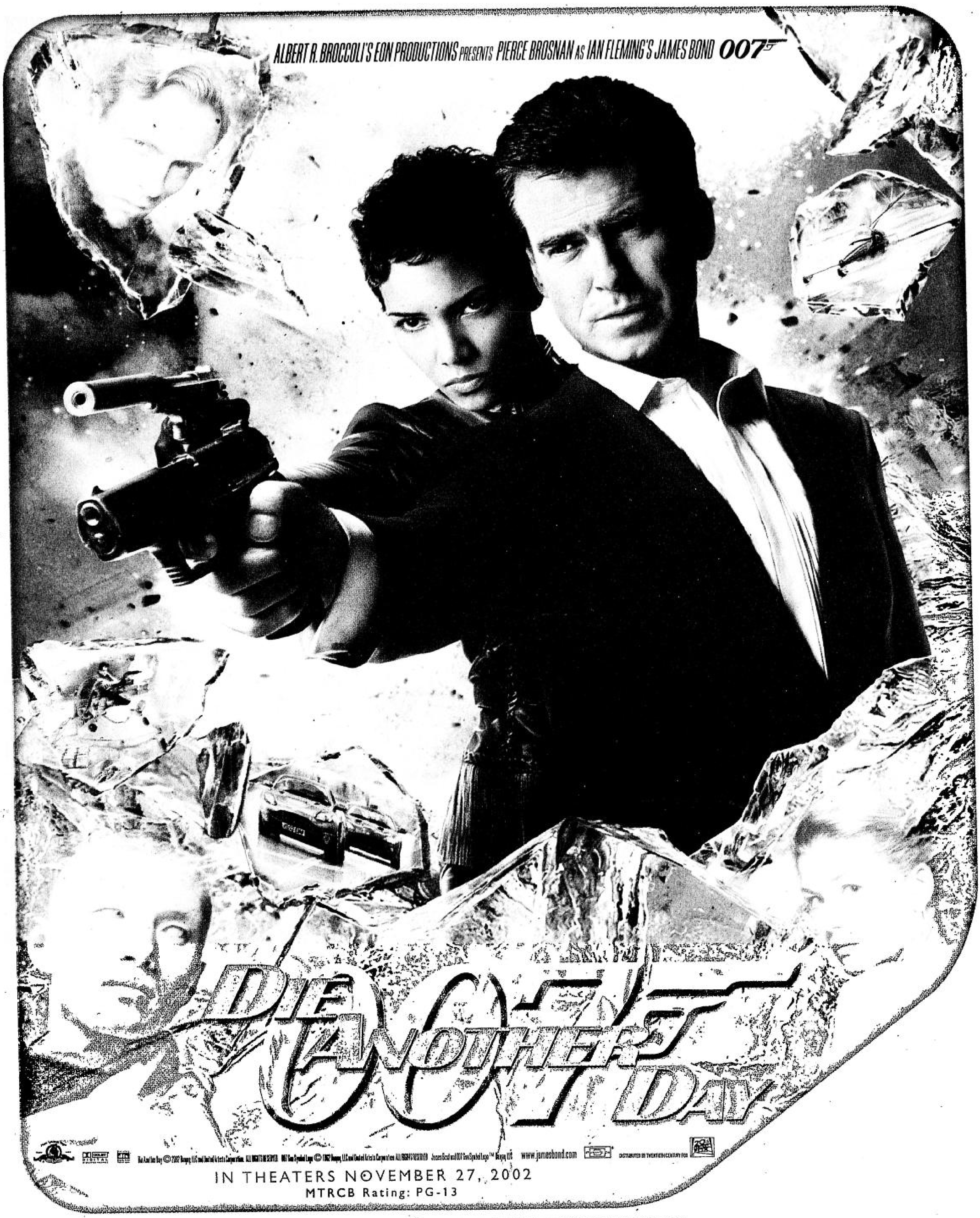
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IN THEATERS NOVEMBER 27, 2002

MTRCB Rating: PG-13

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** Promo ends on November 19, 2002. Winners will be notified via phone call through their registered number.*

*** Promo ends on November 20, 2002.*

Promo valid in Metro Manila only. See flyers for more details. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 4694, Series of 2002.

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Polyphonic Ringtones	POLY <keyword>

Ringtone keywords: **DIEANOTHERDAY**
BONDTHEME1
BONDTHEME2

Note: All images and ringtones are P15.00 each and are available for selected Nokia handsets only.

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10-month budget gap balloons to P188B

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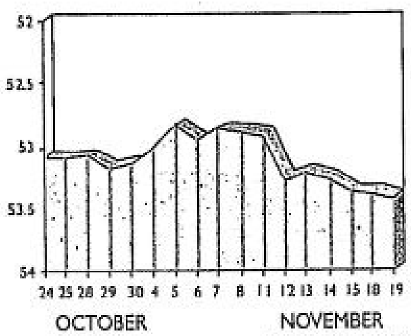


PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P 53.435= $ 1

As of 5 p.m., Nov. 19, 2002

¥ 120.97= $ 1

As of 5 p.m., Nov.19, 2002

GOLD: $319.25-319.75

per ounce Hong Kong, Nov. 19, 2002

CURRENCIES

Nov. 19, 2002 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	0.991277	1.000000	53.395000
Japan	Yen	0.008192	0.008264	0.441300
United Kingdom	Pound	1.568200	1.582000	84.470900
Hongkong	Dollar	0.127099	0.128217	6.846100
Switzerland	Franc	0.681524	0.687521	36.710200
Canada	Dollar	0.623563	0.629050	33.588100
Singapore	Dollar	0.562586	0.567537	30.303600
Australia	Dollar	0.558970	0.563889	30.108900
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.629521	2.652661	141.638800
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.264334	0.266660	14.238300
Brunei	Dollar	0.560994	0.565931	30.217900
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000110	0.000111	0.005900
Thailand	Baht	0.022856	0.023057	1.231100
UAE	Dirham	0.270000	0.272376	14.543500
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.008800	53.864900
Argentina	Peso	0.282415	0.284900	15.212200
Brazil	REAL	0.279706	0.282167	15.066300
Denmark	Kroner	0.134662	0.135847	7.253600
India	Rupee	0.020596	0.020777	1.109400
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.260897	0.263193	14.053200
Mexico	New Peso	0.097711	0.098571	5.263200
New Zealand	Dollar	0.493369	0.497711	26.575300
Norway	Kroner	0.136780	0.137984	7.367700
Pakistan	Rupee	0.017032	0.017182	0.917400
South Africa	Rand	0.103555	0.104466	5.578000
Korea	Won	0.000819	0.000826	0.044100
Sweden	Kroner	0.110306	0.111277	5.941600
Syria	Pound	0.019248	0.019417	1.036800
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.028641	0.028893	1.542700
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000733	0.000739	0.039500

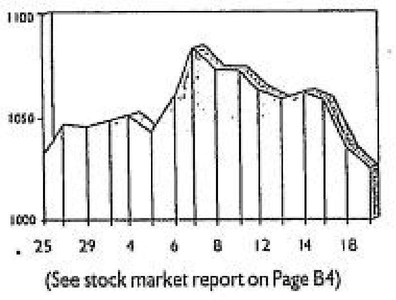
STOCK MARKET

Stocks end down, Meralco gains slightly

STOCKS sagged further yesteday as investors pondered prospects for Manila Electric Co. (Meralco) after last week's Supreme Court ruling that the power distributor must repay customers for overbilling.

Analysts, however, said bargain hunting on Meralco—which touched an eight-year low on Monday—and other blue chips capped losses.

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B4)

"Investors continued to assess the impact of the Supreme Court ruling on Meralco and other related sectors," said BPI Securities investment analyst Spencer Yap.

STOCKS/B3

By Clarissa S. Batino

WEAK revenues and a spike in expenditures pushed the government's budget deficit in the first 10 months to P188 billion, up P22 billion from P166.4 billion as of September.

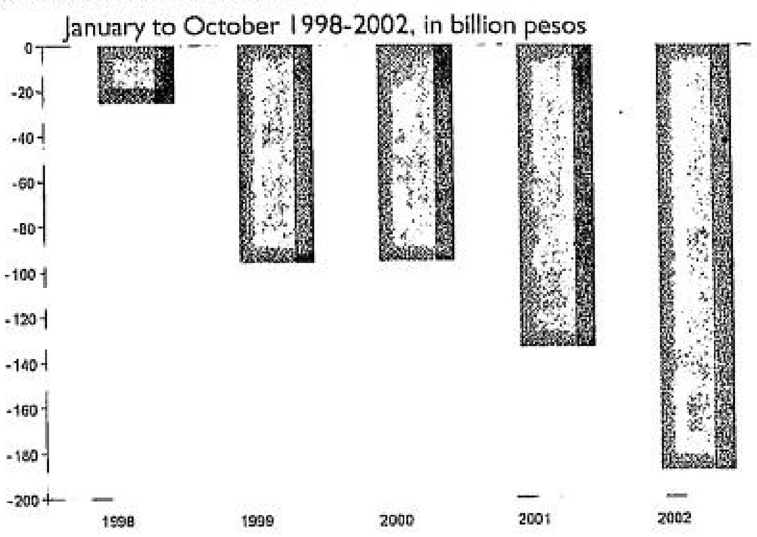
The P188-billion deficit as of October was equivalent to 4.7 percent of gross domestic product, exceeding the third revision announced by the government last month that the fiscal gap this year would hit 4.5 percent of GDP.

This year's ratio would also surpass the 4.9 percent deficit-to-GDP level during the time of former President Estrada when even the International Monetary Fund was forced to terminate a loan program with the Philippines for the government's failure to rein in the fiscal sector.

INQUIRER sources said the deficit target of P12 billion for October was almost doubled after the Bureau of Internal Revenue missed its target by about P7 billion while spending for the month was P3 billion more than programmed.

Budget Deficit

January to October 1998-2002, in billion pesos



Given this scenario, the deficit by yearend is expected to swell to as much as P220 billion from the government's original target of P130 billion, which was later revised to P155 billion or 4 percent of GDP, and again to P180 billion or 4.5 percent of GDP.

Still, National Treasurer Sergio Edeza said the government could finance a deficit of up to P220 billion this year. This was P10 billion more than his pronouncement a week ago that the government could finance a fiscal gap of up to P210 billion.

"But I don't think the deficit this year would reach P220 billion. It will be lower than that because expenditures would slow down in November and December," Edeza explained.

The government will announce the 10-month deficit tomorrow as well as what it believed will be the final deficit figure this year and the new fiscal target starting 2003 until the budget is balanced between 2008 and 2010.

Sources said that the government would likely concede on Thursday that the deficit this year would hit anywhere between P210 billion and P220 billion or 5.3 percent of GDP, and next year, it would have to raise the deficit target from P142.1 billion or 3.3 percent of GDP to about P200 billion or about 4.7 percent of GDP.

The BIR had admitted that as of last week, it only collected P30.2 billion in October against a target of P38 billion for the month. The Bureau of Customs also registered a shortfall of about P800 million.

Higher spending due to disbursements for salaries and bonuses went up by P3 billion

10-MONTH/ B2

P1/liter oil price cut seen in mid-December

By Ronnel W. Domingo

CONSUMER welfare advocate Raul Concepcion yesterday said local oil prices were expected to go down further by P1 a liter next month after Tuesday's round of price reductions that cut pump prices by 20-25 centavos a liter.

Concepcion, who chairs the Consumer and Oil Price Watch, said in a media briefing the ongoing slide in international crude prices meant a total reduction of P1.20 a liter.

"The recent price cuts are only advances and we welcome this," he said. "We expect a lump sum P1 reduction in the middle of December."

But he said the amount depended on whether current Dubai crude prices and the foreign exchange rates held until the end of November.

He said crude prices went down by about $3.54 a barrel from $26.32 in October to $22.78 to date.

In the same period, the peso depreciated by 80 centavos from 52.16 to the dollar in October to 52.96 this month.

P1/LITER/ B2

Imports surged 20.8% in September to $3.02B

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE COUNTRY'S import bill surged for the ninth straight month by 20.8 percent in September to $3.02 billion from a year ago, still buoyed by the improved shipment of electronic inputs for export-oriented industries.

Philippine import expenditure, a key indicator of manufacturing and export performance, has risen by double-digit levels since July this year versus the sharp contractions triggered by the global slowdown last year. Its growth peaked at 22.4 percent in August this year.

The strong import growth, mostly of raw materials and intermediate goods like electronic components used as inputs for exports, reflected the double-digit surge in the country's export receipts since April.

Payments for electronics and components jumped by 75.8 percent to $823.73 million in September from a year ago, accounting for 27.3 percent of the total bill.

Purchases of office and electronic data processing machines ranked second in the list with a 10.3-percent share, rising by 50.9 percent to $310.5 million.

Expenditures for mineral fuels, lubricants and related materials dropped by 2.8 percent to $291.67 million while purchases of telecommunication equipment and electrical machinery likewise slowed down by 13.9 percent to $215.37 million.

Other top purchases were those of industrial machinery and equipment worth $132.65 million or 23.7 percent higher than a year ago as well as cereals and cereal preparations for which payments surged by 103.6 percent to $60.94 million from a year ago.

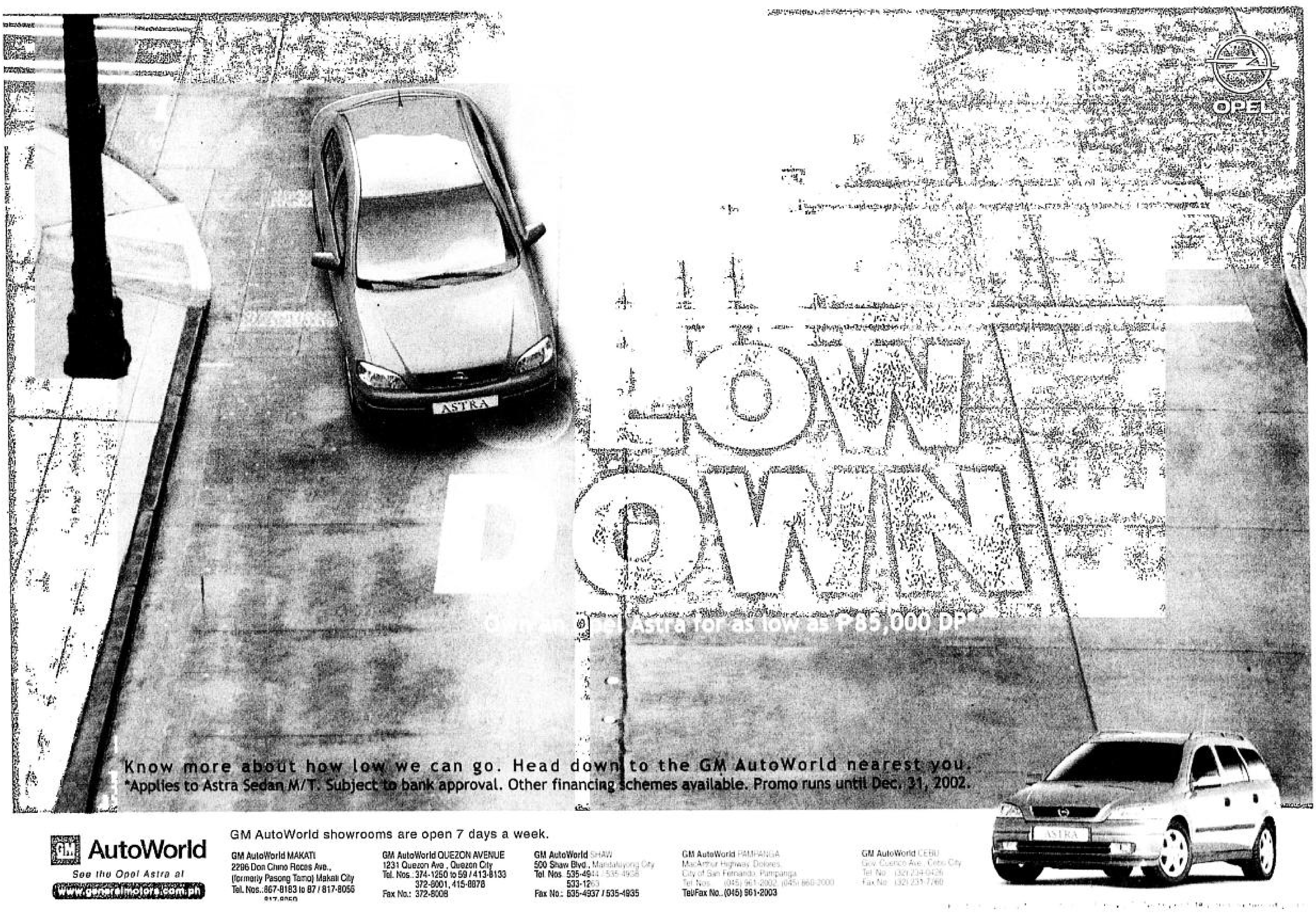
Raw materials and intermediate goods consisting of unprocessed and semi-processed materials like electronics accounted for 38.4 percent of the total bill at $1.16 billion, 17.8 percent higher than a year ago.

On the other hand, capital goods comprised 40 percent of the total bill worth $1.2 billion or 29.9 percent higher, led by telecommunication equipment and electrical machinery.

Purchases of consumer goods hit $267.15 million, 20.6 percent higher than a year ago.

Jose Vistan, an economist at AB Capital Securities, said: "It is a healthy indication that the manufacturing sector is still moving and

IMPORTS/ B2



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10-month budget gap balloons to ₱188B

From page B1

against the target, the sources said. Since July, the Department of Budget and Management had been trying to contain spending below P50 billion against the average expenditures of more than P60 billion a month during the first half.

Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho pointed to weak revenue collection and aggressive spending in the first half for the huge budget deficit this year.

He said the government, specifically its biggest collector the BIR (which accounts for 80 percent of annual government revenues), had been trying to remedy the situation by intensifying its efforts through the aggressive audit of tax payments alongside other administrative measures.

But while government spending had started to slow down in July, revenue collection also remained dismal. While the BIR might have been exceeding collection against the previous year, it only met a revised collection target of P32 billion in September.

While the government claimed it has money to finance the deficit this year, the fiscal deterioration may prompt other rating agencies to follow the lead of Standard & Poor's and similarly downgrade the country's credit rating outlook to negative from stable.

P1/liter oil . . .

From page B1

Meanwhile, Caltex (Philippines) Inc. said it has reduced prices of gasoline by 25 centavos a liter and of kerosene and diesel by 20 centavos a liter effective midnight last night.

Caltex is the last to announce price cuts. Petron Corp., Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. and new oil firms were ahead by a day.

Shell officials said they wanted to pass on to customers the lower prices as soon as possible while the other firms said they cut prices due to competitive pressure.

In a statement, Energy Secretary Vincent Perez Jr. welcomed the latest oil price reduction which he said was the third for this year.

Perez said that global oil prices moved positively after Iraq announced its willingness to accept unconditionally the UN Security Council's resolution requiring Baghdad to disarm.

Global oil prices had been rising following the decision by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries to cut production early this year.

The US' threats of a military attack against Iraq also exerted pressure in oil prices, bringing these to the $26-28 per barrel level.

Imports . . .

From page B1

that should help the economy in the fourth quarter."

Vistan noted that the country's imports during the last two months were mostly raw materials, which meant that manufacturers were expecting bigger demand for both local consumption and exports in the months ahead.

"If the imports were mostly on finished goods, it's not good for us," he said.

Japan was the country's biggest source of imports for the month, accounting for 20.7 percent of the total bill while the United States ranked a close second with a 19 percent share.

Other major sources were: Republic of Korea ($196 million), Singapore ($182.37 million), Hong Kong ($163.4 million); Taiwan ($136.15 million); People's Republic of China ($115.85 million); Malaysia ($103.43 million); Thailand ($100.25 million), and Saudi Arabia ($93.62 million).

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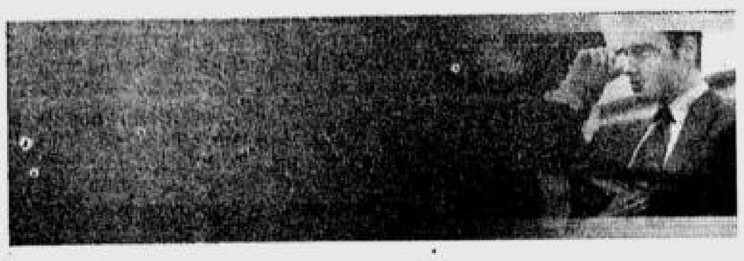

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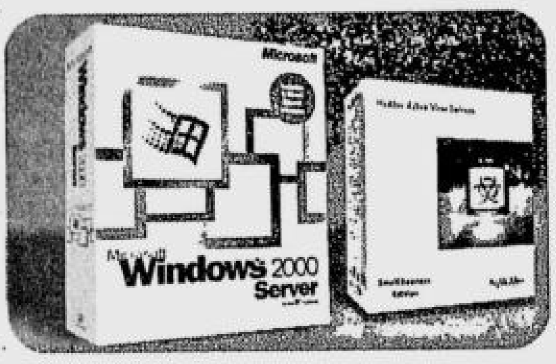

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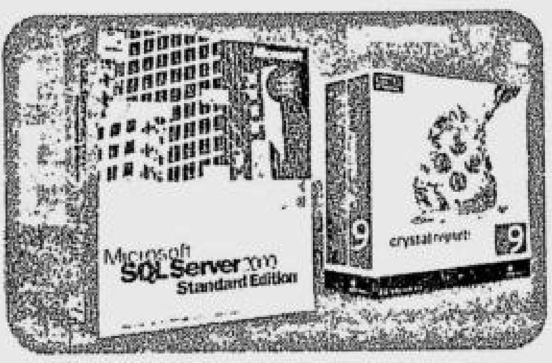

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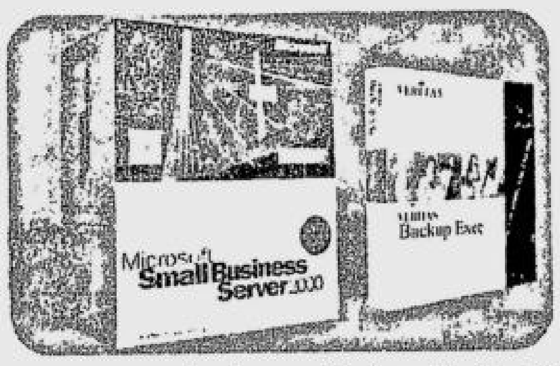

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Purge at Polo

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

FRESH with a clean sweep of the Manila Polo Club elections, the Good Governance and Moral Recovery Team that now controls the country's most exclusive social club has started firing people and placing its own, claiming the dismissal is part of a cost-cutting plan.

And to keep the non-members, social climbers, and assorted riff raffs from turning it into another Virra Mall or, worse, as a hunting ground, the new board has also decided to ban "tiangges" from being held within the polo grounds.

The expat general manager Philippe Bartholomi (S. Cuttle Butt says the Belgian is a distant cousin of ex-PNB president Arsenio Bartolome) has gone on terminal leave starting this week, after being informed that he was being replaced by Microtel Inns COO Nilo Vergara IV.

An ex-Polo Club general manager himself, Vergara is the 10th GM of the club in 12 years, an indication of the volatility of the club's policies and politics.

Vergara told Cocktales that it was actually Paramount Property Management Co., a consulting company where he and Jose Mari del Rosario of ex-Manila Hotel are the principals, that has been hired by the new board to run the Polo Club.

It was not clear what fate awaits Makati Skyline, whose exclusive food and beverage contract was a main issue in the heated electoral campaign. According to the grapevine, Makati Skyline's Lynn Sunico holds a five-year contract that would be difficult to legally challenge.

To improve the club's precarious finances, the new board has also decided to crack down harder on delinquent members whose names are regularly posted by the club's front hallway.

If these VIPs and moneyed elite still fail to clear their delinquencies after sufficient warnings, dodging bills has apparently become a game to a number of members, Cocktales promises to publish their names the next time.

Escaler's escape clause

INVESTMENT banker Noel Escaler will apparently use a technically-still-married defense to foil whatever claim his ex-roommate, painter Mariko Jacinto, may have against the properties acquired by the two when they were still happily living together at the Pacific Plaza Towers penthouse.

Escaler had been divorced by his first wife, now an American citizen who has since remarried, but apparently the divorce has not been registered with the Philippine courts/agencies.

This makes Escaler still technically married to his ex-wife, at least under Philippine laws, according to the theory.

We will stop here, since Pasig Regional Trial Court Judge Isagani Geronimo is scheduled tomorrow afternoon to hear the Escaler opposition to the civil suit filed by Jacinto (see Cocktales, Nov. 4, 2002, for background); we do not want to be accused by the good judge of trying to influence the case one way or another.

In the meantime, the other Escaler in the limelight, impresario Ernest Escaler, still has not offered any explanation about the now famous $2-million Coutts Bank transmission and why he hosted a hush-hush meeting with Mark Jimenez in Escaler's Rockwell condo unit during the early GMA days.

Ernest Escaler was publicly seen last week in a dinner at the Cultural Center for a visiting Rockefeller heir, along with Justice Secretary Hernando Perez, Pastor "Baygon" Saycon, and Copa's Ting-ting Cojuangco.

Intelligencer

- FINANCE Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho is headhunting for a new GSIS chair. The problem is that the incumbent Erap appointee, ex-Justice Hermogenes Concepcion Jr., has a fixed six-year term that is not due to expire until after the 2004 elections.
- COURT of Appeals Justice Gorardo Jacinto will hear the administrative complaints against the "hoodlums in robes" from Baguio City starting Monday. Jacinto was personally picked by Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. to preside over the case after the original CA justice, Romeo Brawner, himself a former Baguio judge, left for the United States for a long vacation.

Heard through the grapevine

BANK of Commerce president Raul de Mesa is the de facto treasurer for the Ping Lacson campaign, with ex-PLDT director/publisher Rodolfo Romero as chief communications strategist.

(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)

Gov't sells P11.5 worth of T-bonds

THE BUREAU of Treasury said yesterday it sold P11.52 billion worth of three-year and five-year bonds.

The three-year paper fetched an average rate of 7.88 percent and a coupon rate of 8.125 percent. Tenders were at P8.69 billion while the accepted amount was P6.23 billion.

The five-year paper fetched an average rate of 9.24 percent at the auction and a coupon rate of 9.625 percent. Tenders were at P6.87 billion and the accepted amount was P5.29 billion.

The government offered P5 billion each of three-year and five-year notes but in the case of oversubscription, it has the right to offer more.

The Philippine debt market was quiet yesterday morning with only a few sporadic deals being done as investors eyed the government's auction.

Interest rates are expected to remain low at least until the first quarter of 2003.

For one, inflation during the first 10 months of 2002 had averaged at a modest 3.2 percent after consumer prices dropped to a 30-month low of 2.6 percent in July from a high of 3.9 percent during the start of the year.

Given the prospects of a stable inflation until the early part of 2003, the central bank had said it might be able to keep overnight rates steady at 7 percent for borrowing and 9.25 percent for lending. *Reuters*

Stocks end down . . .

From page B1

The main index closed down 9.49 points, or 0.92 percent lower at 1,024.99 points. Turnover slightly rose to P338.8 million from Monday's P323.8 million.

Decliners outpaced gainers 29 to 13 and there were 42 stocks unchanged. *Reuters*

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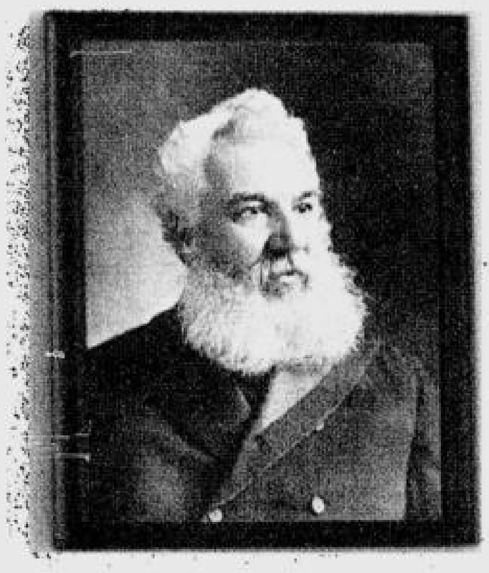
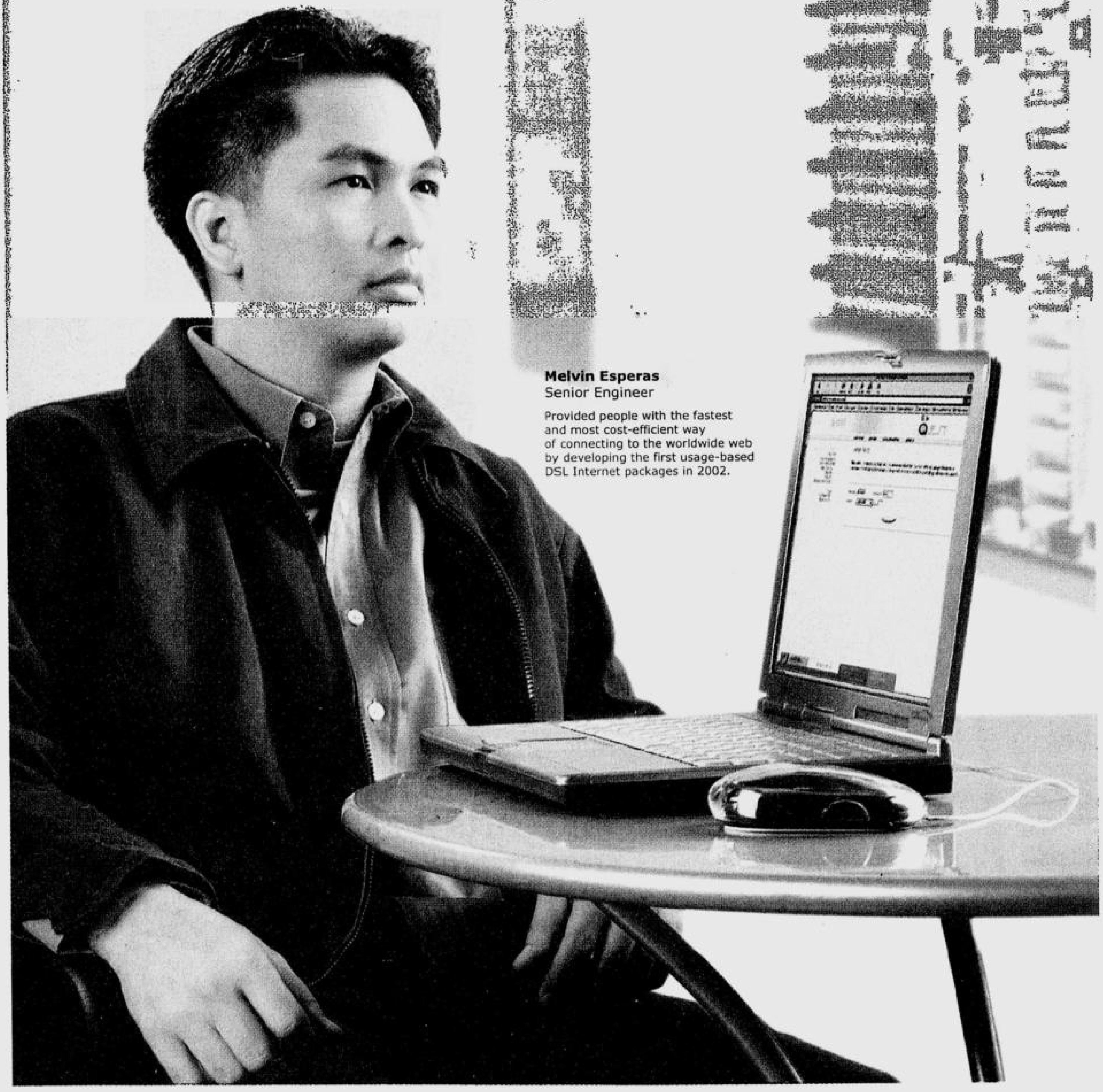


Alexander Graham Bell
Inventor
Provided people with a fast and efficient way of communicating worldwide by inventing the telephone in 1876.



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Ban on second-hand imports to hurt economy, Payumo says

By Juliet L. Javellana

SUBIC Bay Metropolitan Authority Chair Felicito Payumo yesterday warned Congress that the economy would suffer should the government ban the importation of second-hand vehicles using Subic Bay.

Payumo said infrastructure projects in the countryside would be affected and prices of vegetables, fish and other commodities would increase should the government prevent small traders and entrepreneurs from having access to trucks and equipment that were far cheaper than brand-new ones.

Even big contractors do not buy brand-new dump trucks that cost from P6 million to P7 million because they can buy it from Subic's auctioneers for P500,000 to P600,000 each, he said.

If the market for used mixers, dump trucks and other heavy equipment is closed, he warned, infrastructure projects will be derailed, adding that the price of gravel and sand, for instance, will jump from P2 to P20.

Payumo said rice, vegetable and fish traders were also relying on cheap used vehicles because of the prohibitive prices of brand-new units.

Payumo said apart from the cost, it also took as much as three months to buy a brand-new vehicle.

"If this (importation) is closed, can you imagine how much longer the waiting time and price will take so what will happen to the vegetable traders, the fishermen, the small bus operators?" Payumo told lawmakers.

Payumo issued the statement after Negros Oriental Rep. Jacinto Paras asked his comments on car manufacturers' complaint that the used car sector was eating into their market.

Payumo said this was not true. The car industry caters to the A, B, C classes, while the used car market is patronized by the C and D classes, he said.

He said the latter were ordinary employees and small traders who previously could only afford to buy owner-type jeeps.

"Now, they can buy a car in good condition for P300,000," Payumo said.

He said the government should consider the "greater good for the greater number of people."

Payumo's defense of the importation of used right-hand drive motor vehicles that were converted to left-hand drives and auctioned off in Subic sparked a heated argument among some congressmen in yesterday's joint hearing of the House committees on transportation and communications and trade.

Paras, committee chair, said another hearing might be called before the two committees terminate the investigation and come up with a recommendation to Malacañang.

Paras, however, expressed hope for a "win-win" solution on the importation that is strongly opposed by big car manufacturers in the country.

BOI studies trimming weight limit

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE BOARD of Investments is studying a proposal by local government units and small and medium enterprises to further liberalize used truck imports by lowering the weight limit to less than 2.5 tons to include almost all light trucks.

The plan has further agitated local assemblers disappointed with the BOI's half-baked auto policy.

BOI managing head Gregory Domingo yesterday confirmed that the BOI was seriously studying allowing the entry of much smaller truck imports to give LGUs and SMEs access to affordable transport means.

The BOI earlier watered down its commitment for a total ban on used vehicle imports by pushing for a selective ban wherein all imported cars, sport- and Asian-utility vehicles, vans and pickups would not be allowed entry, while special purpose vehicles and trucks weighing at least 4.5 tons and buses weighing at least 6 tons would not be covered.

Investment pledges in Subic Bay surge 60%

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE SUBIC Bay Metropolitan Authority has reported that investment commitments in the Subic Bay Freeport surged by over 60 percent in the first three quarters of the year.

In a statement, the SBMA said investments in the first nine months hit P1.86 billion, up 63 percent from year-earlier levels.

The agency approved 140 new business ventures from January to Septembers this year: 59 new lease agreements and 81 sublease agreements.

The freeport hired an additional 15,368 workers in the first nine months of the year, it reported, pushing total employment in the zone to 55,420.

SBMA Chair Felicito Payumo said more local and foreign investors were enticed to set up businesses in Subic despite the country's economic problems.

Payumo said Subic remained an ideal investment site for foreign and local businessmen looking for a strategic location, tax incentives, a safe environment and skilled workers.

Among the new projects that registered recently with the SBMA were SBFZ Petron Express Center, HS Tek Philippines Inc. and Lithosteel Construction Corp.

Auto parts makers target 100% increase in exports

THE LOCAL auto parts manufacturing industry is aiming to nearly double its exports to $2 billion in three years through improving technology and closer links with foreign carmakers.

Motor Vehicle Parts Manufacturing Association of the Philippines president Feliciano Torres said the Philippines had a potential to be a major supplier of auto parts in the region if its players, mostly small and medium enterprises, would open up to technology upgrades and forge joint ventures with foreign carmakers.

The $2-billion export target is based on a 2000 study where the industry is projected to grow by 10 percent a year.

Last year, auto parts exports fell 10 percent to $900 million due to weak demand from the major markets.

This year, the MVPMAP is expecting exports to rebound by 33 percent to $1.2 billion.

Torres, president of Yazaki Torres, said his group had tapped the Japan Overseas Development Corp. Automotive Expert Dispatch Program to boost the technology of local auto parts manufacturers.

The program would bring Japanese automotive experts to the Philippines for a few months to provide training and seminars to auto parts makers on how to improve their operations.

"The Japanese experts would facilitate the transfer of technology and capability in critical areas such as cost reduction and management, quality and productivity improvement, process enhancements and equipment use," Torres said. *Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.*

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Tuesday, November 19, 2002)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	17.5	17.5	17.25	17.25	63,400
Bank of the Phil. Islands	40.5	40.5	38.5	38.5	842,700
China Banking Corp.	625	625	625	625	1,640
Citystate Savings Bank	14.25	14.25	14.25	14.25	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	26	26	26	26	61,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	31	31	30.5	30.5	59,000
Philippine National Bank	29	29	29	29	6,700
Union Bank of the Phil.	17.75	17.75	17.75	17.75	36,800
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	0.98	0.98	0.98	0.98	20,000
Filipino Fund Inc	0.34	0.4	0.34	0.4	40,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1200	1200	1180	1180	520
Sun Life Financial Serv.	900	905	900	905	580
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	16.5	16.5	16.5	16.5	300
Diversified Fin. Network	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	1,000
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc	0.39	0.39	0.38	0.39	270,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	412.5	412.5	412.5	412.5	350
Ipeople Inc.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	100,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.025	0.025	0.025	0.025	600,000
ISM Communications Corp..	0.015	0.015	0.014	0.014	2,200,000
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	50,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	3.55	3.8	3.55	3.8	57,000
Piltel	0.2	0.2	0.185	0.19	4,470,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	245	245	236	243	143,870
Ivantage Corp.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	800,000
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	15,000,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	8.8	9	8.4	8.7	526,000
Manila Electric Co. B	9	10.25	8.8	10.25	12,239,000
Petron Corp.	1.56	1.56	1.52	1.54	907,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	50,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.22	1.22	1.22	1.22	300,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.24	2.24	2.24	2.24	145,000
William, Gothong & Aboitiz	3.45	3.45	3.45	3.45	197,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	108,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	15,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	14.25	15	14.25	15	1,203,900
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	34	34.5	34	34	106,700
RFM Corp.	0.73	0.73	0.73	0.73	500,000
San Miguel Corp. A	58	59	57.5	59	689,500
San Miguel Corp. B	63.5	64	63.5	63.5	161,900
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	4.45	4.45	4.4	4.45	945,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.36	2.36	2.34	2.34	101,000
A. Soriano Corp.	0.43	0.43	0.43	0.43	300,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.005	0.005	0.005	0.005	2,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	2.4	2.4	2.2	2.2	25,000
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.12	0.135	0.12	0.135	400,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.15	0.175	0.13	0.175	3,730,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	100,000
First Phil Hldgs. Corp.	10	11.25	10	10.75	627,100
Ionics Inc.	1.36	1.36	1.24	1.24	49,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.32	1.32	1.32	1.32	8,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.58	0.59	0.58	0.59	120,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.205	0.22	0.205	0.215	1,930,000
Music Corp.	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09	300,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.82	0.82	0.82	0.82	120,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	3	3	3	3	30,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co.	0.033	0.033	0.033	0.033	200,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	20,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Interphil Labs Inc. A	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	45,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.51	0.51	0.51	0.51	240,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	10.25	10.25	9.9	9.9	153,200
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	140,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.37	0.37	0.37	0.37	390,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	20,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	17	17	17	17	183,400
Jollibee Warrants	14	14.5	14	14.5	11,800
PLDT (10% Pref) Series G	10	10	10	10	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10	10	10	10	1,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	4.95	4.95	4.8	4.9	3,024,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	20,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.14	0.14	0.13	0.13	4,460,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	0.84	0.86	0.84	0.86	2,230,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	100,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	20,000
SM Development Corp..	1.06	1.06	1.06	1.06	4,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	5.4	5.4	5	5.1	5,319,000
MINING					
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.16	0.17	0.16	0.17	220,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	10,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	500,000
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.035	0.035	0.035	0.035	700,000
OIL					
Interport Res. B	0.0014	0.0014	0.0014	0.0014	1,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	21,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0026	0.0026	0.0026	0.0026	21,000,000
Pacifica	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	100,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.026	0.026	0.026	0.026	500,000

	SHARES	VALUE(P)
Bank & Fin Svc	1,134,340	40,420,350.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	53,032,020	253,392,405.00
PRO	15,177,000	44,509,990.00
Mining	1,430,000	197,400.00
OIL	43,600,000	120,500.00
GRAND TOTALS :	114,373,360	338,640,645.00

	AVERAGES	
Bank & Fin Svc	392.67	DOWN 10.78
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,437.08	UP 0.55
PRO	447.43	DOWN 9.26
Mining	1,060.48	DOWN 2.34
OIL	1.26	DOWN 0.04
All Shares Index	613.45	DOWN 14.66
Composite	1,024.99	DOWN 9.49

NO. OF ADVANCES: 13; NO. OF DECLINES: 29; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 42; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 84; NO. OF TRADES: 2,537

DISCLOSURES

MATSUSHITA Electric Philippines Corp. has declared a 20-centavo per share cash dividend in favor of stockholders as of Dec. 2. The dividend will be payable on Dec. 20.

* * *

HOUSE of Investments Inc. has announced the dissolution of its subsidiary, **HI-Dai'ei Trading Co.**, effective Nov. 30 this year.

* * *

KEPPEL Philippines Holdings Inc.'s new stock transfer and dividend paying agent is **Securities Transfer Services Inc.**

* * *

KEPPEL Philippines Marine Inc.'s new stock transfer and dividend paying agent is **Securities Transfer Services Inc.**

* * *

ELECTED directors of **Island Information and Technology Inc.** were James Shih, Andres Lao Sr., Salvador del Mundo, Roman Pacia Jr., Andres Lao Jr., Serafin Linda, Rodolfo de Guzman, Marilou Faustino and Elisa Shih.

* * *

PHILWEB.COM Inc. shall change its name to **Philweb Corp.** *Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research*

Consumers group asks gov't to clarify rules on cable TV

By Abigail L. Ho

THE CONSUMERS Union of the Philippines has asked the National Telecommunications Commission to come up with clear-cut guidelines to prevent foreign cable program providers from taking advantage of local cable operators and their subscribers.

In a letter to NTC chief Armi Jane Borje, CUP president Quirino Marquinez expressed concern that some groups might be working toward a monopoly in the cable industry with the pullout of Star Group Ltd.'s five premium channels from Destiny Cable Inc.'s lineup last month.

"This sudden business maneuver will unfairly constrain the public to subscribe to Beyond Cable, thus denying them the consumer's right to freedom of choice and unrestricted access to information," he said.

When news came out that Star Group would be taking out its five top channels—ESPN, Star Sports, Star World, Star Movies and National Geographic—from Destiny's lineup, the cable industry grapevine was abuzz with talks that SkyCable-Home Cable tandem Beyond Cable would have exclusive rights to carry those channels.

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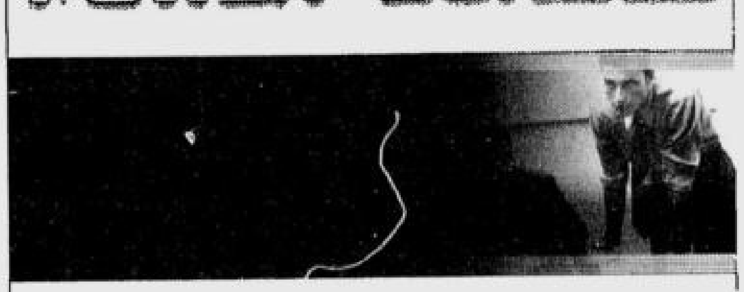

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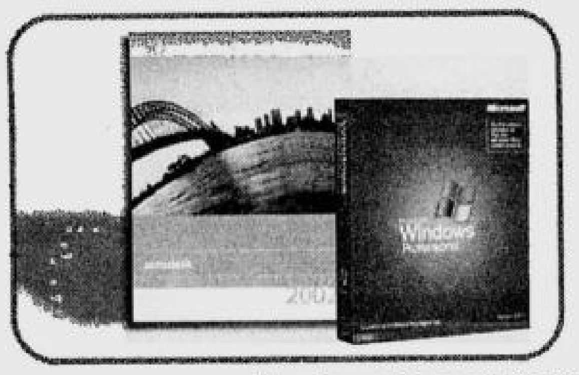

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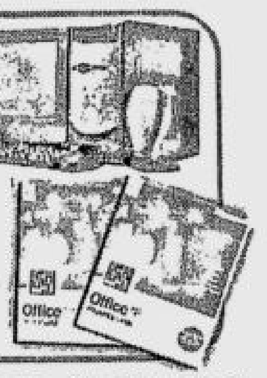

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3rd quarter GDP growth seen at 3.9-4.4%

By Doris C. Dumlao and Clarissa S. Batino

THE DOMESTIC economy was expected to have grown by 3.9-4.4 percent in the third quarter of the year despite the slowdown in agriculture, still well within the government's target of 4-4.5 percent for the full year.

Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Dante Canlas said in a briefing with the INQUIRER business staff Tuesday night that the robust growth from the services sector helped boost the domestic economy during the period.

He said the country's GDP growth might exceed 4 percent for the full year.

GDP refers to the total amount of goods and services produced by the domestic economy in a given period.

Seasonally, Canlas also said that the second quarter of the year was usually better than the third quarter.

In the second quarter, the country's gross domestic product expanded by a higher-than-expected level of 4.5 percent following the dramatic rebound in industries and the resilient services sectors.

For the fourth quarter, Canlas said GDP growth was again expected to rebound to 4.4-4.9 percent. "The growth projections are on track. Services and industry will sustain growth."

For the full year, he said the services sector would likely expand by 5-5.5 percent and the industry sector, by 3.3-3.7 percent. Agriculture is also seen to chalk up a positive albeit a slower growth of 2.7-3.6 percent.

In the case of the manufacturing sector, which accounts for 70 percent of industrial output, it has seen a sharp rebound after huge contractions triggered by the US-led global economic slowdown last year.

Canlas also said that the El Niño dry spell did not seem to have an impact on the country's productivity to date.

Among other policy challenges, however, would be to create more employment opportunities and attain the target of a balanced budget by 2006.

"This (balanced budget target) rests on some budget measures. Otherwise, it will slip," Canlas said.

With the ballooning budget deficit, the financial market is worried that the government's zero-deficit target by 2006 might no longer be feasible.

Meantime, Canlas said the Development Budget Coordination Committee was also considering a revision in its target for GDP growth for 2003 to a wider range of 4.2 to 5.2 percent from an original outlook of 5 to 5.5 percent.

"We decided to consider the US-Iraq scenario and consolidate it with the original target," said Canlas, who is also vice chair of the DBCC.

He said the area of concern should be the possibility that the conflict in the Middle East would erupt into a full-blown war by next year.

Based on the scenarios drawn by the Neda, the government's GDP growth would slow down to 4.2 to 4.7 percent next year if the war indeed escalated.

For 2003, the DBCC had approved months ago a growth target of 5 to 5.5 percent for GDP, 5.1 to 5.7 percent for gross national product, 4 to 5 percent inflation average, exchange rate of P51 to P52 to a dollar, an 11-percent growth in imports, and a budget deficit of P142.1 billion.

Canlas said other macroeconomic numbers would have to be revised to consider the impact of the US-Iraq war as well as the slowdown in revenues this year that would affect the target collection next year and, consequently, the fiscal deficit outlook.

Canlas explained that the government drew up two scenarios in determining the impact of the Middle East conflict on the local economy.

One is a protracted conflict that could last from yearend to the first half of 2003 and largely assuming that the US would attack Iraq unilaterally, in which case, Saudi Arabia would not increase its crude oil production.

The better scenario, Canlas said, was if Saudi Arabia would increase its crude oil production and help contain the crude oil uptick to between $27 and $30 per barrel.

Under this setting, the conflict is also expected to last only until the first quarter of 2003 where crude oil may start to stabilize to $25 per barrel.

With the more modest setting, the GDP growth would fall to 4.7 percent, inflation would rise to 4.6 percent, and the deficit would go up by P1.84 billion to P143.94 billion.

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HIACE SUPER GRANDIA SRP: 1,198,000

LOW DOWNPAYMENT scheme

[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
15%	134,700	91,861	63,198	50,111	35,847	28,925	25,011
20%	194,600	86,004	59,255	46,931	33,261	26,728	23,028
30%	314,400	75,254	51,849	41,065	29,103	23,387	20,150
40%	434,200	64,503	44,441	35,198	24,946	20,046	17,271
50%	554,000	53,763	37,034	29,332	20,788	16,705	14,393

LOW MONTHLY AMORTIZATION scheme

[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
15%	179,700	87,842	60,433	47,961	34,309	27,684	23,916
20%	239,000	82,066	56,500	44,792	31,745	25,510	21,938
30%	359,400	71,255	49,093	38,925	27,587	22,169	19,079
40%	479,200	60,505	41,669	33,059	23,430	18,828	16,201
50%	599,000	49,754	34,289	27,182	19,272	15,487	13,322

COMBO PLAN

[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
15%	154,700	90,075	61,968	49,155	25,164	28,374	24,524
20%	214,600	84,227	58,030	45,980	32,587	26,187	22,552
30%	334,400	73,477	50,624	40,114	28,430	22,846	19,674
40%	454,200	62,726	43,217	34,247	24,272	19,505	16,795
50%	574,000	51,976	35,810	28,381	20,114	16,164	13,917

HIACE GRANDIA SRP: 1,113,000

LOW DOWNPAYMENT scheme

[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
15%	121,950	85,344	58,714	46,535	33,304	26,873	23,236
20%	177,500	79,902	55,051	43,601	30,901	24,832	21,394
30%	288,900	68,914	48,169	38,151	27,038	21,728	18,720
40%	400,200	58,927	41,288	32,701	23,176	18,624	16,046
50%	511,500	48,939	24,407	27,251	19,313	15,520	13,371

LOW MONTHLY AMORTIZATION scheme

[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
15%	166,950	81,324	55,949	44,405	31,766	25,632	22,142
20%	222,500	76,904	52,290	41,492	29,385	23,014	20,324
30%	333,900	65,916	45,416	36,012	25,522	20,510	17,650
40%	445,200	55,928	38,533	30,561	21,660	17,406	14,975
50%	556,500	45,941	31,652	25,111	17,797	14,302	12,301

COMBO PLAN

[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
15%	141,950	83,557	57,495	45,600	32,620	26,321	22,750
20%	197,600	78,125	53,826	42,650	30,227	24,290	20,919
30%	308,900	68,137	46,945	37,200	26,365	21,188	18,244
40%	420,200	58,150	40,064	31,750	22,502	18,082	15,570
50%	531,500	48,162	33,182	26,300	18,639	14,978	12,896

RAV4 A/T SRP 1,350,000

LOW DOWNPAYMENT scheme

[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
15%	157,500	103,516	71,216	56,469	40,395	32,595	28,184
20%	225,000	96,916	66,773	52,886	37,481	30,120	25,950
30%	360,000	84,602	58,426	46,275	32,796	26,355	22,706
40%	495,000	72,687	50,080	39,664	28,111	22,590	19,463
50%	630,000	60,573	41,733	33,053	23,426	18,825	16,219

LOW MONTHLY AMORTIZATION scheme

[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
15%	202,500	99,497	68,451	54,319	38,857	31,354	27,090
20%	270,000	92,918	64,016	50,746	35,965	28,901	24,880
30%	405,000	80,804	55,672	44,135	31,280	25,136	21,036
40%	540,000	68,689	47,325	37,525	26,595	21,371	18,392
50%	675,000	56,574	38,978	30,914	21,909	17,606	15,148

COMBO PLAN

[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
15%	177,500	101,730	69,987	55,513	39,712	32,044	27,698
20%	245,000	95,139	65,549	51,936	36,807	29,758	25,474
30%	380,000	83,025	57,202	45,324	32,122	25,813	22,231
40%	515,000	70,910	48,855	38,713	27,437	22,048	18,987
50%	650,000	58,796	40,509	32,103	22,752	18,283	15,743

RAV4 M/T SRP: 1,315,000

LOW DOWNPAYMENT scheme

[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
15%	152,250	100,833	69,370	55,005	39,348	31,750	27,453
20%	218,000	94,404	65,042	51,514	36,509	29,339	25,277
30%	349,500	82,603	56,911	45,075	31,946	25,671	22,118
40%	481,000	70,803	48,781	38,636	27,382	22,004	18,598
50%	612,500	59,002	40,651	32,197	22,818	18,337	15,798

LOW MONTHLY AMORTIZATION scheme

[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
15%	197,250	96,813	66,605	52,855	37,810	30,509	26,359
20%	263,000	90,405	62,287	49,376	34,993	28,120	24,207
30%	394,500	78,605	54,157	42,936	30,430	24,453	21,047
40%	526,000	66,805	46,027	36,496	25,866	20,786	17,887
50%	657,500	55,004	37,898	30,057	21,302	17,118	14,728

COMBO PLAN

[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
15%	172,250	99,046	68,141	54,049	38,665	31,198	26,967
20%	238,000	92,637	63,817	50,564	35,836	28,797	24,801
30%	369,500	80,836	55,687	44,124	31,272	25,130	21,642
40%	501,000	69,036	47,557	37,685	26,708	21,463	18,482
50%	632,500	57,225	39,427	31,246	22,145	17,795	15,322

HILUX SR5 SRP: 1,093,000

LOW DOWNPAYMENT scheme

[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
15%	118,950	83,810	57,659	45,719	32,705	26,390	22,819
20%	173,600	78,466	54,061	42,818	30,346	24,386	21,010
30%	282,900	69,658	47,304	37,465	26,553	21,338	18,384
40%	392,200	58,850	40,546	32,113	22,759	18,269	15,757
50%	501,500	49,041	33,788	26,761	18,966	15,241	13,131

LOW MONTHLY AMORTIZATION scheme

[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
15%	163,950	79,791	54,894	43,569	31,167	25,149	21,724
20%	218,600	74,468	51,307	40,678	28,830	23,167	19,939
30%	327,900	64,660	44,549	35,320	25,036	20,119	17,313
40%	437,200	54,852	37,791	29,974	21,243	17,071	14,687
50%	546,500	45,043	31,034	24,622	17,450	14,023	12,061

COMBO PLAN

[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
15%	138,950	82,024	56,430	44,763	32,022	25,838	22,332
20%	193,600	76,089	52,837	41,867	29,672	23,844	20,534
30%	302,900	66,881	46,079	36,515	25,879	20,796	17,908
40%	412,200	57,073	39,322	31,162	22,086	17,746	15,282
50%	521,500	47,264	32,564	25,810	18,292	14,700	12,655

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People, Events & Products

aespinosa@inquirer.com.ph
Aries Espinosa, Editor

Pana's Strat Ur Stuff commences today

THE BIENNIAL convention of the Philippine Association of National Advertisers (Pana) will be staged today until Nov. 22 at the Centennial Hall of The Manila Hotel presented by Philippine Daily Inquirer, Manila Bulletin Publishing Corp., Philippine Star, ABS-CBN Broadcasting Company and GMA Network Inc. in cooperation with Globe Telecom and Citibank NA, with Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company, SM Inc., Ever-Gotesco Malls, Motorola Philippines, McDonald's Philippines, Tactica Advertising, Oeno System, Meridian Inc., Dinsmor Inc. and McGraphic Carranz.

The first day will be opened with a welcome address from Pana president Carminia B. Rodriguez of Citibank NA, followed by the keynote address of Department of Trade and Industry Secretary Mar Roxas, followed by the opening of the trade exhibit at the Millennium Hall. The first speaker will be the chief executive officer of MarkPlus Strategy Consulting, Hermawan Kartajaya of Jakarta, Indonesia on the topic, "The Essence of the Brand." The second topic is "Research Insights: Beyond the Figures", with speakers from San Miguel Corp., namely marketing research manager Lolita T. Vargas and vice president/manager of corporate marketing group Menlou B. Bibonia. Session three speaker is Robert G. Labayen, managing partner and executive creative director of J. Walter Thompson Manila who will discuss "Revisiting Integrated Marketing Communications in Crisis", followed by Smart Communications department head, value added services, personal communications and mobile distribution Jerome Almirante with his topic, "Emerging Media: Which is Taking the Lead?" The last speaker of the first day is Unilever Philippines chair and chief executive officer Howard D. Belton on "Retail Management Planning through Efficient Consumer Responses." The emcees are Jay Sonza and Vicky Morales, while the session chair of the day is Cesar Jose C. Jesena of Ayala Land Inc.

The second day, Nov. 21, will be opened with the first day's summary by Herbie Sancianco of Market Bridges Inc. The first topic is "Brand Valuation: Going Beyond the Bottomline Figures" with speakers Jun Alcantara, assistant vice president for marketing of Asia Brewery and Dr. Leonardo R. Garcia Jr., director-Graduate Studies (College of Business & Economics) of De La Salle University-Manila. The next speaker will be David B. Guerrero, chair and executive creative director of BBDO/Guerrero Ortega, with his topic "Creatives on the Edge," followed by Lizelle G. Maralag, managing director of Starcom Worldwide Philippines, who will discuss "Media Planning with a Shoestring Budget." "Product Planning and Development; Learning from Successful Comebacks" will be discussed by Joey Concepcion, president and chief executive officer of RFM Group of Companies. The last speaker of the day will be Noy Dy-liacco, senior vice president/director of communications of Nestle Philippines with the topic "Customer Service: Do Customers Always Rule the Game?" The emcees of the day are Anthony Pangilinan of Business Works and Boy Abunda of Backroom. The day will be closed with cocktails sponsored by ABS-CBN Broadcasting Company.

Day 3 will be a big day for the students. It will be the Pana Marketing Communications Awards presented by Inquirer Libre.

Strat Ur Stuff
Strategic Marketing Summit

SM Inc. will be one of the sponsors for the Pana biennial convention "Strat Ur Stuff." Shown seated from left are Pana executive director Dr. Nonie S. Azarcon, SM Inc. assistant vice president for marketing communications Marivic Arugay and Pana president Gigi B. Rodriguez. Standing from left are Pana directors Jojo Samson, Atoy Babasa, Susie Achacoso-Cruz, Jun Alcantara and Beth Flores.

Families make 1st Philippine Parenting Convention a success

ALASKA Powdered Filled Milk is happy to say that the family is still the backbone of Philippine society—as proven by the hundreds of responsible parents and their bright and eager children who attended the first-ever Philippine Parenting Convention held Oct. 26 to 29 at the NBC Tent, The Fort.

It seems that the current perception of parents being too busy at work to spend quality time with their kids, and kids being too "cool" to spend time with their "square" parents may not all be true. Because for four happily busy days, families bonded together and had a lot of fun going around, exploring the activities that the recently concluded 1st Philippine Parenting Convention had to offer.

There, families listened to relevant talks about modern parenting and family building. They joined in workshops, live video conferences and programs all geared towards nurturing family ties. They watched their kids play entertaining and educational games, and even in some occasions, played with them—all in all, ensuring that families learn with each other and from each other.

They also discovered a lot of interesting and exciting treats for every member of the family—ranging from fun stuff like books and toys, to more mundane items such as educational plans, wine and air conditioners. Of course, there was the Alaska Powdered Filled Milk Booth, which made sure that no family went home empty-handed, by giving away gift items such as Alaska Aces PBA items and packs of Alaska Powdered Filled Milk.

As a bonus, visiting families got a rare chance to hobnob with Alaska endorsers like Mr. Pure Energy Gary Valenciano with wife Angeli, and Megastar Sharon Cuneta with Senator Kiko Pangilinan. They were there not to perform but to learn more and share insights about parenting, like the rest of us.

Alaska has for years been a staunch promoter of good health and balanced nutrition for children. Through its high-quality powdered filled milk, advertising campaigns that foster good values, and various school athletic programs, Alaska has helped in the physical development of Filipino youth. This time around, Alaska has added a new dimension to this nurturing, providing children with the proper discipline, right mental attitude and positive value formation they need to be well-rounded adults.

Indeed, Alaska is extremely proud that this celebration of family and parenthood turned out to be a tremendous success. Because all the lessons learned and benefits gained from the 1st Philippine Parenting Convention benefit our children.

The Philippine Parenting Convention was the brainchild of celebrity couple Anthony and Maricel Laxa Pangilinan through their company BusinessWorks Inc. The couple believed that by allowing parents to rediscover the joys and challenges of parenthood through high-impact, interactive seminars using the latest training methodologies, one of the country's most urgent concerns—nurturing children to become stable, well established adults and responsible citizens—would be answered.

After seeing the terrific turnout during the convention, the energetic response to the different seminars and programs, as well as the smiling faces of both parents and children, it seems more and more plausible that this better future that the PPC and Alaska want to achieve will come to pass.

CELEBRITY couple Anthony and Maricel Laxa Pangilinan conceived of the PPC through their company BusinessWorks Inc.

BITS Clips

St. Jude alumni premiere film

"THE NAME'S Bond...James Bond." Saint Jude Catholic School Alumni Association is inviting all alumni and friends to the advanced screening of the latest James Bond film "Die Another Day" on Nov. 24, Sunday, 7 p.m., at SM Megamall Cinema 10. Debonair Pierce Brosnan returns to the screen as Ian Fleming's secret agent 007 together with Oscar Best Actress Halle Berry as his leading lady in this 40th anniversary presentation of the most successful franchise in film history. Tickets are available from SJCSAA batch representatives and at the gate. For reservations, call 285-6431. This project is for the benefit of the renovation of the St. Jude Shrine in memory of Msgr. Peter Tsao SVD.

Manila hosts science event

MANILA hosts this year's ongoing 14th Asian Colloquium in Nephrology, a 4-day scientific event which started Nov. 19 until 22 at the Edsa Shangri-La in Mandaluyong. The Philippine Society of Nephrology Inc., the organizing committee for the event, has invited experts from different parts of the globe to address timely issues and present the latest research and updates on various topics in nephrology, hypertension, and transplantation. Fresenius Medical Care, the world's largest integrated provider of products and services for individuals with chronic kidney failure, sponsors a talk on "Dialysis Quality: Is it Costly or Cost-Effective?" This aims to challenge current practices and provide new insights vital to the interest of all the stakeholders in achieving the critical balance between quality and cost of managing end-stage renal disease.

Course in direct selling

DE LA Salle University (DLSU) has joined forces with Direct Selling Association of the Philippines (DSAP) to achieve a milestone in Philippine marketing education by offering the first-ever Certificate Course in Direct Selling and Network Marketing to be held Nov. 20 to 22 at the Waldo Perfecto Room, DLSU campus, Manila. With direct selling emerging as one of the most cost-effective and most preferred distribution method for both consumable and durable products over the past 5 years, DLSU and DSAP conceptualized this certificate course to teach distributors the professional skills needed to succeed in the trade. DSAP represents 25 member-companies with a combined sales force of more than 2 million distributors nationwide. For inquiries, call the DSAP secretariat at 864-2673, or e-mail dsaphils@mozcom.com.

Newsboy Koolboy sales promo produces more winners

Fairview news dealer Star Herman (right) poses with her newsboys (wearing their Newsboy Koolboy T-shirts). One of her carriers also won a bicycle. Also shown are Inquirer circulation manager for sales and promotions Bien Baltazar, Inquirer field coordinator Tony Compañero and IPI's Eric Victoria and Roy Mendiola.

Metro-Manila news dealers Carlito Corro, Alex Celeste, Marissa Cuyugan, Ramon Tapales, and Evelyn Valle together with their respective newsboys visited the Inquirer offices recently to claim their "newsboy koolboy" items from Inquirer Publications Inc. circulation manager Raymond Rivera (left) and PDI circulation manager for sales and promotions Bien Baltazar (right). The Newsboy Koolboy sales promo is a joint project of the Philippine Daily Inquirer and Inquirer Publications Inc., publisher of Bandera, Tumbok and Cebu Daily News.

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CITIBANK PARTICIPATES AT AIM CONSUMER FAIR

Management Students Association (AIM-SA), in cooperation with the Ayala Center is holding its Consumer Fair until Nov. 22 at Greenbelt 1 Lobby, Makati City. One of the event's participants, Citibank NA, represented by Noemi G. Azura, vice president and director for consumer loans (seated right) signed the contract with AIM-SA chair Lloyd C. Casis, MBM 2003 (seated left). With them are (standing, from left) AIM-SA vice chair Rashish Pandey, Sunrise Exhibits organizer Addie Ureta, Joshuare Marketing's Lita de Nieva (a Citibank external service provider), Citibank channel manager Roselle Caranay, and assistant vice president Minnie Hubalde. For more details about the Consumer Fair, call the AIM-SA Secretariat at 892-4011 locals 300 and 386, fax no. 840-3949 or e-mail aim_sa@dataserve.aim.edu.ph.

Guinbirayan Barangay High School reunion

THE ALUMNI Batch '72 of Guinbirayan Barangay High School (GBHS), Guinbirayan, Santa Fe, Romblon, would like to invite interested graduates and alumni of GBHS to join our plan of a grand reunion, an event you should not miss. For details, coordinate with Romeo M. Cezar, 0917-6161-246, 931-9183 or Nelia Molina-Pacatang, 0918-3262-822, 817-7724 or email at nmolina_p@yahoo.com. Please be a part of this get-together to relive the good old days.

Remy Martin launches best of XO

FOR CONNOISSEURS who demand and enjoy the best in life, Remy Martin introduces the best of XO for taste and pleasure—Remy Martin XO Excellence. The new product will be launched via an exclusive party series on Nov. 20 at Magnum, Nov. 21 at DreamBar and Nov. 27 at Vbar. Remy Martin XO Excellence is a blend of 85-percent Grande Champagne and 15-percent Petite Champagne. It boasts of a myriad of aromas—strikingly fruity with ripe fig, candied orange and juicy prunes. It is best enjoyed Neat (in a cellar-master glass) or on the rock (in a tumbler glass). At room temperature or chilled, Remy Martin XO Excellence is best with foie gras (goose liver), sweet steamed dumplings, sharks fin soup, green tea ice cream or with chocolate desserts. Remy Martin XO Excellence, available in 70 cl bottles, is available in selected outlets.

MNCs see Philippines as poor investment site

MULTINATIONAL corporations consider the Philippines one of the least attractive investment destinations in Asia due to its poor infrastructure, security problems and corruption, a business research group said yesterday.

The Wallace Business Forum said an August survey of 49 MNCs operating here found 63 percent considered the Philippines "worse" than its Southeast Asian neighbors in investment terms.

Only 27 percent said the country matched its neighbors, while 10 percent said it was better, the group said.

The MNCs home offices also ranked the Philippines eighth as a "potential investment destination" behind China, Thailand, Malaysia, South Korea, India, Singapore and Vietnam.

Security and law and order problems were the No. 1 concern for the MNCs, said Peter Wallace, head of the survey group.

"Home offices said executives cannot travel to the Philippines because it is unsafe," Wallace said.

While the international community lauded the Philippines for a 2001 popular revolt that toppled the presidency of Joseph Estrada amid allegations of massive corruption, Wallace noted that the problem still persisted.

Corruption under the presidency of his successor, President Macapagal-Arroyo, "is not worse than Estrada, but it is still there," Wallace said.

Poor infrastructure, political instability, bureaucratic red tape and a slow legal system were also cited as major concerns.

Despite the negative survey results, the Philippine subsidiaries ranked 39 out of 124 among subsidiaries of 124 worldwide, he said.

The survey also found 44 percent of the respondents planned to expand their operations here in the next three years, while 56 percent said they were downsizing or maintaining the status quo.

"But nobody said they're pulling out," Wallace said. *AFP*

CROWDS gather at SM's newest mall in Mindanao. GRACE ALBASIN

SM opens new mall in Cagayan de Oro

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—Retail giant Shoemart opened a store here yesterday, proving that Mindanao's peace and order condition remains stable.

SM Supermall, the retail giant's second store in Mindanao after Davao City and 13th in the country, sits on a 5.9-hectare land along Fr. Mastersons Avenue. It has three levels and has a floor area of 56,000 square meters.

Millie Dizon, SM's first vice president for marketing, told the INQUIRER that SM saw Northern Mindanao's economic potentials.

"Part of SM's vision is to build malls in the entire archipelago. Since this city shows too much potential, we saw the need to build one here because we want to serve this market and its underlying provinces," Dizon said.

SM spent about P530 million to build the mall. Construction began a year ago. *Grace Cantal-Albasin, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Bank lending increases 1.2% in September

COMMERCIAL bank lending rose by 1.2 percent in September from a year ago.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura said yesterday the increase in bank lending was due to increased credits to firms in the services and real estate sectors.

Outstanding loans reached P1.41 trillion as of end September, also higher than the previous month's P1.38 trillion.

"The improvement in lending was traced to increased credit to firms in two major sectors: the community, social and personal services, and the financial institutions, real estate and business services, which together accounted for 42.7 percent of total loans," Buenaventura said in a statement.

He said the rise in lending to agriculture and forestry also contributed to growth in bank lending.

"The uptick in bank lending during the period reflected the aptness of the current interest rate environment in helping provide for the economy's credit requirements as well as the improving quality of banks' assets," Buenaventura said.

The central bank chief said he expected sustained pick-up in lending in coming months given signs of strengthening domestic demand.

Although banks have been liquid with cash, bank lending has been slow to take off in the country where direct investments have been dwindling on worries over the ballooning budget deficit and peace and order situation. *Reuters*

Psalm, PGI conclude steam supply contract

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE DEPARTMENT of Energy said yesterday the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. had reached a new steam supply agreement with Philippine Geothermal Inc., ending the supplier's seven-year dispute with the National Power Corp.

The energy department said the new deal meant savings of at least $200 million for the government over the life of the contract, which would end in 2021.

It added that the new agreement had been approved in a joint meeting last week of the boards of directors of Napocor and Psalm, which was taking over the power firm's assets and was assuming its financial obligations.

Psalm president Edgardo del Fonso said in a statement that the deal assured that PGI would continue to enjoy exclusive right to explore, develop and manage the geothermal resources of Tiwi and Makban fields.

Del Fonso, however, said PGI would bear development and market risks.

He added that Psalm and Napocor, instead of paying service fees and other payments in the old contract, would pay the Unocal subsidiary only for actual volume of steam used in power generation.

The new contract does not provide for fixed fees nor for guaranteed off-take obligations, the Psalm chief said.

"The steam would be priced (at rates lower than the cost of coal) and would result in the lowest cost of steam in all geothermal production fields in the country," he said.

The low fuel price will ensure a high rate of usage of government-owned generating plants an enhance their privatization value, he added.

Also, part of the agreement provides that PGI will form a company that will act as operator of the geothermal development projects.

The new company will be Filipino-owned, in keeping with ownership requirements for entities involved in the development and use of natural resources.

The proposed settlement ended a seven-year-long dispute between Napocor and PGI, which arose from differing interpretations of the renewal clause of the original 25-year service contract that expired in 1996.

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Loan Agreement # PH-P200

INVITATION TO BID

The Republic of the Philippines, through the Department of Education, has received an Official Development Assistance (ODA) loan from Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) in the amount of P1,749 million (Y7,210 million) towards the financing of the Secondary Education Development and Improvement Project (SEDIP) dated December 28, 1999. It is intended that part of the proceeds of this loan will be applied to eligible payments for the new construction and/or repair of different school buildings located at **TVC-STA TERESA NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL, STA. TERESA, JORDAN, GUIMARAS.** Disbursement of the ODA loan by the JBIC will be subject, in all respects, to the terms and conditions of the Loan Agreement, including the disbursement procedures and the "Guidelines and Procurement under "JBIC ODA Loans". No party other than the Department of Education shall derive any rights from the Loan Agreement or have any claims to loan proceeds. The above Loan Agreement will cover only a part of the project cost. As of the remaining portion, the agency will, take appropriate measures for finance.

JBIC requires that bidders and contractors, as well as DepEd-SEDIP under contracts funded with JBIC ODA loans and other Japanese ODA, observe the highest standard of ethics during the procurement and execution of such contracts. In pursuance of this policy, JBIC: 1. will reject a proposal for award if it determines that the bidder recommended for award has engaged in corrupt or fraudulent practices in competing for the contract in question; 2. will recognize a contractor as ineligible, for stated period of time, to be awarded a contract funded with JBIS ODA loans if it, at any time, determines that the contractor has engaged in corrupt and fraudulent practices in competing for, or in executing, another contract financed by JBIC ODA loans or other Japanese ODA.

Bidding is open to all Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB)- registered contractors or joint venture contractors with PCAB license category *B* with classification *Medium A*, General Building.

Bidders may obtain further information and acquire the bidding documents from:

The Bids and Award Committee
MUNICIPALITY OF JORDAN
Tel. Nos. 581-3445 / Telefax No. 581-3445

A complete set of bidding documents may be purchased by interested eligible bidders starting 20-29, 2002 until 5:00 p.m. of November, 2002 upon submission of a Letter of Intent to the above office and payment of a non-refundable fee of P5,000.00.

Pre-bid conference shall be conducted on **December 2, 2002** at 2:00 p.m. to be held at **Jordan Session, Jordan, Guimaras.**

Submission of bid together with all documents required in the bid documents must be delivered to the aforesaid venue on **December 9, 2002**, 10:00 a.m. at the **Jordan Session Hall, Jordan, Guimaras.** All bids will be opened immediately thereafter in the presence of the bidders or their legally authorized representatives.

(Sgd.) **FELIPE HILAN A. NAVA, M.D.**
Municipal Mayor, BAC Chairman

(PDI - Nov. 14, 20 & 26, 2002)

Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA)
Almeda Bldg., Roxas Blvd. cor. San Luis St., Pasay City
Tel. Nos. 551-3443 / 891-6423, Telefax 551-9587
Website: www.peza.gov.ph
PEZA

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

1. The Philippine Economic Zone Authority (**"THE OWNER"**) invites all interested bidders to register and to apply for eligibility and to bid for the Supply of Equipment and Materials for the following Power Distribution Systems:

   Mactan Economic Zone — Distribution Line Hardwares and Various Tools
   — Retrofitting and Replacement of the Existing OCB with Vacuum Circuit Breaker
   — Power Capacitors, Disconnecting Switch and Upgrading of Metering System
   Bataan Economic Zone — Installation, Test and Commissioning of 3 units 69 KV SF6 Power Circuit Breaker
   — 2 Assemblies of Metalclad Switchgears

2. The Approved Budget for the Contract is PhP27.564 M.
3. Bidding Documents may be secured by registered bidders from **November 25 to 29, 2002** at the ***Office of the Deputy Director General for Finance and Administration, 3rd Floor Almeda Building Philippine Economic Zone Authority, Roxas Boulevard corner San Luis St., Pasay City,*** upon payment of non-refundable fee of Three Thousand Pesos (Php3,000.00).
4. To be registered with the OWNER, interested Bidders must submit the following documents (in case of photocopied documents, the original must be presented):
   a) DTI Registration of Business Name of SEC Registration Certificate, whichever may be appropriate under existing laws of the Philippines;
   b) Mayor's permit / municipal license;
   c) Taxpayer's Identification Number;
   d) Statement of the prospective bidder that it is not "blacklisted" or barred from bidding by any government agency, office or corporation, including non-inclusion in the "blacklist" of contractors issued by the Construction Industry Authority of the Philippines (CIAP);
   e) Notarized affidavit certifying under oath that each documents submitted is an original copy or a true and faithful reproduction or copy of the original.
5. Submission of eligibility documents in four (4) copies must be received in sealed envelopes on or before ***3:00 p.m. of 09 December 2002*** and addressed to ***The Office of the Deputy Director General for Finance and Administration, 3rd Floor Almeda Building Philippine Economic Zone Authority, Roxas Boulevard corner San Luis St., Pasay City.***
6. Time and date of **Pre-Bid Conference,** as well as the **Submission and Opening of Bids** shall be indicated in the **Notice of Eligibility.**
7. The BAC reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any defect or informality, assume no obligations whatsoever or indemnify to the bidder any expense or loss that it may incur in the preparation of its bid, and to accept the bid most advantageous to the Government. The provision of Executive Order No. 40 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations shall apply to this bidding process.

(Sgd.) **CHAIRMAN**
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – Nov. 20 & 27, 2002)

PHILIPPINE POSTAL SAVINGS BANK, INC.

PostalBank Center, Liwasang Bonifacio, Manila
PRE-QUALIFICATION, BIDS & AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND BID

The **PHILIPPINE POSTAL SAVINGS BANK, INC.** through its Pre-Qualification, Bids and Awards Committee (PBAC) will accept applications for accreditation for the Bidding of the Bank's Security Services. The submission of bid documents will be on **November 27, 2002** and the Opening of Bids on **November 29, 2002**, at 2:00 p.m., respectively, at Philippine Postal Savings Bank Inc., 2nd Floor PostalBank Center, Liwasang Bonifacio, Manila.

All bids must be submitted in a sealed envelope and shall be accompanied by Bidder's Bond equivalent to 10% of the total bid price in the form of Cash, Manager's/Cashier's Check only. Accreditation fee of P500.00 (non-refundable) shall be collected from each applicant.

Interested bidders may secure bid documents including the Terms of Reference (TOR) from the Secretariat, 2nd Floor, PPSB Building, Liwasang Bonifacio, Manila.

The Bank reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any defects or informalities contained therein or accept the offer/ bid considered most advantageous to the bank.

For further information, please call the PBAC Secretariat at 5270057 or 5270142.

(Sgd.) **EDWIN A. REMODO**
Chairman, PBAC

(PDI--Nov. 19, 20 & 21, 2002)

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Office of the Secretary
Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City

ANNOUNCEMENT

Anent M.O. No. 7 which requires certification of compliance of foreign meat plants to HACCP program, the following is the 2nd batch schedule, of accepting application for accreditation as HACCP auditor, for the information and guidance of all concerned:

December 15, 2002	- deadline for submission of application for accreditation as HACCP auditor
December 16-31, 2002	- evaluation of applications
January 2, 2003	- announcement of accredited HACCP auditors
January, February, March	- actual audit of foreign exporting plants
April 1, 2003	- HACCP Audit Certificate required for the issuance of Veterinary Quarantine Clearance

(Sgd.) **DR. EFREN C. NUESTRO**
Executive Director - NMIC
Spokesman on M.O. No. 7

(PDI - Nov 20 2002)

Republic of the Philippines
UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES DILIMAN
Diliman, Quezon City

INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND BID

Interested parties are invited to prequalify and bid for the

U.P. DILIMAN FACULTY DORMITORY COMPLEX PROJECT

The total project area (property) consists of the following sections: 1) an area measuring approximately 11,700 square meters, bounded by Ma. Guerrero, Agoncillo, and Magsaysay Streets; and 2) an adjacent area measuring 8,300 square meters, bounded by Ma. Guerrero and Agoncillo Streets. Both sections shall be developed by the winning bidder (in a public bidding) under a Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) Contract, with Section 1 as a Faculty Dormitory for designated members of the University constituency, and Section 2 as an Academic Hangout for student, faculty and other members of the University constituency.

Prequalification forms and terms of Reference may be obtained from the Development and Planning Committee (DPC) Secretariat, Director's Office, Institute for Small-Scale Industries (4/F Virata Hall/ISSI Bldg.), University of the Philippines Diliman, Quezon City, upon payment of non-refundable fee of P2,000.00 from **November 18 to 22, 2002**. Deadline of submission of duly accomplished prequalification documents will be on **December 2, 2002**. After the evaluation of the documents submitted, the prequalified proponents shall be duly notified of the schedule of subsequent activities. For inquiries, please contact Tel. No. **920-5301** to **99** loc. **4717**; D.L. **920-6923, 927-9238**; Fax **927-1034** (c/o Ms. Ludy Cubillas); e-mail: lourdes.cubillas@up.edu.ph

(Sgd.) **EMERLINDA R. ROMAN**
Chancellor

(PDI - Nov. 13 & 20, 2002)

Republic of the Philippines
PHILIPPINE ECONOMIC ZONE AUTHORITY
Roxas Boulevard cor. San Luis St.
Pasay City, Philippines
PEZA

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that **KSS PHILIPPINES, INC. (KPI)** with plant site at the New Cebu Township One — Special Economic Zone (NCTO-SEZ) has filed with the Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA) an application for **PIONEER STATUS** to be granted to its production of Crystal Oscillator based on newness of product and technology, which if approved, will entitle the company to six (6) years of Income Tax Holiday. Said application has been officially accepted and is under process in this office.

Any person with valid objections to or pertinent comments on the above-mentioned application may file with the PEZA his/her objections in writing and under oath, within fifteen (15) days from the date of this publication.

Please direct your position papers/comments to the Enterprise Registrations Department of PEZA (Tel. Nos. 551-9544 and 551-34-57; and Telefax 551-3456).

(Sgd.) LILIA B. DE LIMA
Director General

(PDI - Nov. 20, 2002)

MANILA GAS CORPORATION
INVITATION TO PUBLIC BIDDING

The Manila Gas Corporation (MGC) is offering for sale, through sealed public bidding on November 29, 2002 at 2:00 PM at the NDC Audio Visual Room, Penthouse, NDC Building, 116 Tordesillas St., Salcedo Village, Makati City its Real Estate Property located in Paco, Manila subdivided as follows:

LOT NO.	AREA (SQM)	PRICE PER SQM	MINIMUM BID PRICE
1	7,422	P 20,000	P 148,440,000
2	3,600	20,000	72,000,000
3	3,600	20,000	72,000,000
4	5,973	20,000	119,460,000
5	3,000	17,000	51,000,000
6	3,000	17,000	51,000,000
7	5,025	17,000	85,425,000
8	5,698	15,000	85,470,000
	37,318		

The sale of the above properties shall be strictly on **CASH AS-IS WHERE-IS BASIS.**

MGC reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any of the formalities required, or to accept only such bids or portion thereof which may be deemed advantageous to MGC.

Due diligence period is from **November 19-27, 2002** from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, to be coordinated with the MGC Bids Committee. A Pre-bidding Conference will be held on **November 26, 2002** at 2:00 PM at the NDC Audio Visual Room. Interested parties may secure the Bidding Package starting **November 19, 2002** from MGC c/o Mr. Glen Sadian, Tel. No. 564-1781 or 563-9384 / Fax No. 563-9388.

(PDI – November 20, 2002)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
CENTRAL OFFICE
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

Bldg #3, SAN LAZARO COMPOUND
RIZAL AVENUE, STA. CRUZ
MANILA, PHILIPPINES
TEL. NO (632) 743-83-01 LOCAL 1336
TELEFAX NO. 743-72-36

20 November 2002

INVITATION FOR BIDS

IFB NO. 2002-12-11 (8)

The Department of Health hereby invites sealed written bids for **2,700 PCS. SENTRONG SIGLA SEAL,** with an approved budget of Three Million Nine Hundred Fifteen Thousand Philippine Pesos only chargeable against BLHD funds.

A complete set of bidding documents may be obtained by interested bidders at the PLS, Bldg. No. 26, DOH upon payment of ***non-refundable fee of Two Housand Pesos*** upon submission of authenticated Mayor's Permit and Business Name from ***November 25 to December 9, 2002*** 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday to Friday.

A ***pre-bidding conference*** will be held at the BHDT Conference Room, Bldg. #24, DOH at 1:00 p.m. on November 27, 2002

Bids must be submitted to the BHDT Conference Room at ***1:00 p.m. on December 11, 2002*** All bids must be accompanied by a bid security of Forty Thousand Pesos in the form of cash, certified/ cashier's/ manager's check and bank draft/guarantee confirmed by a reputable local bank, valid for one hundred twenty days from the date of bid opening.

The DOH reserves the right to accept or reject any bid and to annul the bidding process and reject all bids at any time prior to award of contract without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders or any obligation to inform the affected bidder or bidders of the grounds to the DOH.

By Authority of the Secretary of Health

(Sgd.) **ZENAIDA O. LUDOVICE, M.D., MPH, CESO II**
Assistant Secretary & COBAC Chairperson

(PDI – Nov. 20 & 27, 2002)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education, Culture, and Sports
Third Elementary Education Project

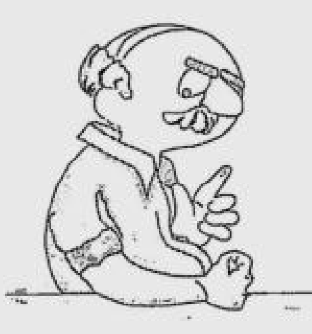
INVITATION FOR BIDS

Date: November 11, 2002
Loan No. 4108-PH
IFB No. PISU-CO/242002

1. The Government of the Republic of the Philippines (through the Department of Education (DEPED) has received a loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) in various currencies towards the financing of Third Elementary Education Project (TEEP). It is intended that part of the proceeds of this loan will be applied to eligible payments under the contract for supply and delivery of School Kits to Selected Public Elementary Schools in the Philippines.
2. The Department of Education (DEPED), Project Implementation Support Unit (PISU) for Third Elementary Education Project (TEEP), now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the supply and delivery of Standard School and Classroom Kits to Selected Public Elementary Schools in the Philippines.
3. For the purpose of this bidding, eligible bidders shall be those who have experience in the supply or selling and distribution or delivery of Standard School and Classroom Kits to public or private schools in remote areas in a developing country like the Philippines. The Purchaser will grant a margin of preference to goods manufactured in the Philippines.
4. Interested eligible bidders may inspect the bidding documents at or obtain further information from the BAC Secretariat, Ground Floor, Mabini Bldg. DepEd Complex, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City, Tel. # (632) 636-65-43 or 632-13-61 local 2019.
5. A complete set of bidding documents may be purchased by interested bidders starting **November 11, 2002** upon submission of letter of intent to the above and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee of Two Thousand Five Hundred Pesos (P2,500.00).
6. The provisions in the Instructions to Bidders and in the General Conditions of Contract are the provisions of the World Bank *Standard Bidding Documents Procurement of Goods*.
7. Bids must be delivered to the Bulwagan ng Karunungan, Rizal Building I, Department of Education, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City, Philippines, on or before 10:00 AM on **January 3, 2003** and must be accompanied by a security of not less than two (2) percent of total bid price.
8. Bids will be opened in the presence of bidders' representatives who choose to attend at 10:00 AM on **January 8, 2003** at Bulwagan ng Karunungan, Rizal Building I, Department of Education, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City
9. Prior to bid opening, a pre-bid conference will be held on **December 3, 2002**, 10:00 AM at the address indicated in paragraph 8

(Sgd.) **JUAN MIGUEL M. LUZ**
Undersecretary
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI--Nov. 15, 17 & 20, 2002)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Greenspan says economic policy-makers make mistakes

FEDERAL Reserve chair Allan Greenspan testifies before the US Congress' Joint Economic Committee on Capitol Hill in Washington. Greenspan said last week's sharp interest rate cut should help the country through its "soft patch," adding that if the recovery unfolds as he expects, no more stimulus was needed. REUTERS

WASHINGTON—Federal Reserve chair Alan Greenspan said Monday that the nation's central bank has learned a lot about how to manage the economy during its 89-year history, but policy-makers will never know enough to avoid all mistakes.

"History teaches us that no matter how well-intentioned economic policies and decisions may be, policy-makers never can possess enough knowledge of the complexities of the economy nor sufficiently foresee changes in the economic environment to avoid error," Greenspan said.

"But history can and does provide examples that can help guide policy-makers away from repeating the worst mistakes of the past."

Greenspan spoke at a book party sponsored by the American Enterprise Institute for the publication of "A History of the Federal Reserve: Volume 1, 1913-1951" by Allan H. Meltzer, a professor of economics at Carnegie Mellon University.

Meltzer, a noted economist, spent 30 years researching the history of the Fed. He served on the Council of Economic Advisers during the Reagan administration and more recently chaired a federal commission that recommended sweeping changes in the operation of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank.

Greenspan said Meltzer's history included "the most exhaustive examination to date of records of policy discussions" by the Fed's board of governors and officials at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, which in the early years after the Fed's creation played the major role in monetary policy.

One of the themes in Meltzer's book is an examination of how Fed mistakes in handling the 1929 stock market crash contributed to the Great Depression of the 1930s.

Greenspan said Meltzer had done an excellent job in examining "the early internal power struggles and the profoundly challenging economic and political events" of the Fed's early years.

"Over the years we have become more knowledgeable about how the economic environment evolves. But to our predecessors, much was virgin policy territory," Greenspan said. "It is no wonder that many of their initiatives went astray."

Greenspan noted that Meltzer had produced an early draft on the chapter covering the Great Depression in 1966 as part of a "monumental 30-year effort" to produce just his first volume of Fed history, which ends with the landmark 1951 agreement giving the Fed more independence from the US Treasury. *AP*

US to use subsidies as leverage at WTO

OTTAWA—The United States will use its pumped-up package of farm subsidies as leverage to negotiate during World Trade Organization talks on agriculture, the US minister-counselor for agriculture in Canada said on Monday.

"You don't unilaterally disarm, so to speak," Gary Groves told Reuters. "If they really want to change those provisions that we have, that are perfectly legal under the WTO, then they better come to the table and negotiate seriously."

The United States has come under fire for its latest package of domestic farm subsidies, approved by legislators in May, which boosted crop and dairy subsidies by 67 percent, adding an estimated $6.4 billion a year in spending.

Developing countries say they cannot compete with US farm goods given the large domestic subsidies.

Exporters who belong to the Cairns Group, including Canada, have also decried the support.

But Groves said the United States wants to see ambitious cuts to domestic and export subsidies, as well as tariffs, come out of negotiations.

"If countries come and negotiate seriously, our proposal is to reduce our domestic support program by almost half," he said. "We all have sensitive sectors in our countries, but our position is everything's on the table and open to negotiation." *Reuters*

Sokor business group sees '03 growth at 5.3 %

SEOUL—A powerful South Korean business lobby group said on Tuesday weakening domestic demand would slow growth in Asia's fourth largest economy to 5.3 percent next year with the auto, steel and construction businesses hit hard.

The Federation of Korean Industries (FKI) expected economic growth to taper off next year from an estimated 6.2 percent this year, mainly because a rise in private consumption would slow to 4.8 percent in 2003 from a 6.8-percent climb this year.

FKI's growth forecast is lower than the central Bank of Korea's estimate of 5.5 percent for next year.

"Domestically, there is a risk of weakening consumption growth in the wake of a real estate bubble," the FKI said in a statement after its economic outlook seminar.

"Also, there are lingering concerns overseas, including the US economy, financial instability in Latin America and delayed reforms in Japan."

The FKI said auto makers are expected to feel the negative impact of a stronger won, while the steel industry could suffer tougher trade barriers and a glut in the global market.

Construction firms would also experience slow housing demand next year, it said.

The group of the country's top 30 conglomerates forecast the won would strengthen further to an annual average of 1,150 against the dollar next year, versus 1,238 this year.

But growth in overall exports would accelerate to 7.0 percent next year from a 6.2-percent estimate for 2002, aided by a recovery in the information and technology sector in the second half, the FKI said.

The report followed on the heels of an FKI survey earlier this month, which showed South Korean firms were expecting for the first time in a year business conditions to worsen due to growing concern about the US economy and a possible war in Iraq.

Another survey by the government also showed consumers had turned pessimistic about the economic outlook for the first time in 11 months in October. *Reuters*

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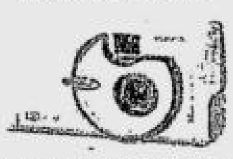

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No.4278, Series of 2002

BOJ tweaks policy, keeps framework unchanged

TOKYO—The Bank of Japan stepped up its support for the nation's frail banking system on Tuesday, leaving overall monetary policy unchanged but saying it would aim to give banks more access to funds by tweaking a key monetary target.

As signs grow that Japan's recovery from last year's recession is losing momentum, the board voted unanimously to leave unchanged its quantitative easing policy, by which it pumps huge amounts of funds into the banking system.

The BOJ said it would keep its target for financial institutions' current account deposits parked at the BOJ in a 15-20 trillion yen ($125-166 billion) range but would aim to keep the amount at the upper end of the target rather than the middle.

This will have the effect of giving banks more access to funds.

After raising the range by five trillion yen when it eased policy last month, the bank has already been moving towards the upper end, leaving banks with deposits of 18.13 trillion yen on Monday compared to 17.77 trillion on Friday.

"In an oral agreement, they decided to aim for 20 trillion yen, the upper end of the 15-20 trillion yen range, and try to achieve as high a level as possible," a BOJ official said.

Economists said that by targeting the upper end, the central bank was trying to soothe rising concerns about banking sector instability in the wake of new government reforms to tackle the nation's chronic bad loan problem.

But they also said it was unlikely to have much direct impact on the economy.

Some analysts had expected the BOJ to announce steps that would give firms easier access to funds as banks tighten their lending, but it made no announcement on this.

"The BOJ left its current framework intact, but by saying it would target the high end of the (15-20 trillion yen) range it indicates its aim is to help stabilise the financial system, rather than any macroeconomic benefit," said Mamoru Yamazaki, chief economist at Barclays Capital in Tokyo.

"It is not a financial crisis yet, but with bank shares being sold heavily, the risks of financial system instability are rising, and the central bank is seeking to soothe such concerns by showing they are ready to provide ample funds," he said.

Japanese government bonds (JGBs) came off their earlier highs but remained firm after the decision, while currencies showed little reaction.

The BOJ has pledged to maintain the 20-month-old quantitative easing policy until year-on-year changes in consumer prices stabilize above zero percent, thus signaling an end to three years of deflation.

But it has been reluctant to embark on more radical policies, saying there is a limit to the effectiveness of monetary policy without accompanying progress on structural reform.

"There was talk that the BOJ might boost its buying of long-term JGBs but today's decision shows that they are in a waiting mode for the government to come up with concrete steps for their anti-deflation and bad loan package," said Minako Iida, an economist at Deutsche Securities.

The BOJ's decision comes just under a week after economic growth figures showed the pace of Japan's recovery slowing in the July-to-September period on the back of slowing exports to a stagnant world economy.

Gross domestic product rose 0.7 percent from the previous quarter, compared to 1.0 percent growth in April-June, and many economists expect the pace to slow further in the months ahead.

The government's new plan to clean up the mountain of bad loans held by banks, unveiled late in October, could add to deflationary pressure in the world's second-largest economy as banks are forced to tighten their generous lending practices. *Reuters*

IBM plans to regain supercomputer crown

NEW YORK—In a computing power struggle tinged with national pride, IBM Corp. says it hopes to regain the title for world's fastest supercomputer from Japan's NEC Corp. in 2004 when Big Blue delivers a machine that will model nuclear weapons for the US government.

"There's a bit of nationalism involved," said Jack Dongarra of the University of Tennessee. "We like to think in the US that we have the most powerful computers. Well, the Japanese have it now."

Japan's NEC jolted the computer world in April when its Earth Simulator, which knits together 5,000 processors to attain a theoretical speed of 40 trillion calculations per second, became the first machine built outside the United States to top the supercomputer speed list.

The Yokohama, Japan-based Earth Simulator not only took the lead, but did so by trouncing the then-fastest machine, IBM's ASCI White, by running almost five times as fast.

"It's an exciting time," said Dongarra, who leads the group of researchers that tracks the world's 500 speediest computers, known as the Top 500 list. "We went through a period of doldrums. The Earth Simulator has revived interest in high-power computing."

At the SuperComputing 2002 conference in Baltimore on Tuesday, US Energy Secretary Spencer Abraham was to announce a $290 million contract with IBM to build two new supercomputers, one of which, dubbed ASCI Purple, is expected to clock in at 100 teraflops, or trillions of calculations per second.

Like so many of America's fastest computers, ASCI Purple will be used to simulate the explosions and decay of the U.S. nuclear weapons stockpile without resorting to test detonations of the warheads.

In 2005, IBM plans to deliver a second supercomputer to the Department of Energy, dubbed Blue Gene/Lite. *AP*

US Trade Representative Robert Zoellick (right) and Singapore Trade Minister George Yeo (left) arrive for a press conference in Singapore on Nov. 19 before announcing that their countries have reached substantial agreement on a free trade deal. The agreement is the first between the United States and an Asian country, and is expected to serve as a model for future US free trade deals with other nations in the region. REUTERS

American Air, BA seek to revive deal

FORT WORTH, Texas—American Airlines and British Airways are again seeking regulatory approval to operate a trans-Atlantic alliance.

The airlines have twice dropped similar plans after running into opposition from the US Department of Transportation.

The airlines said they filed a request Monday for a so-called code-sharing agreement, which would let the carriers sell tickets on many of each other's flights.

American, the world's largest carrier, wants to sell British Airways' flights from the United Kingdom to Ireland, continental Europe, Africa, the Middle East and Asia.

British Airways seeks to put sell American flights from gateway cities such as New York to other points within the United States, Mexico, the Caribbean and Latin America. It would also put its code on American flights between Chicago and Glasgow and Manchester.

Under code-sharing agreements, an airline that sells a ticket on another carrier gets a portion of the fare. *AP*

US nears first Asian trade pact

SINGAPORE—The United States moved to the brink of sealing its first free trade pact in Asia Tuesday, with US Trade Representative Robert Zoellick saying only one issue remained to be settled with Singapore.

The deal, two years in the making, is expected to be the blueprint for a raft of similar free trade agreements (FTAs) Washington wants to establish throughout Southeast Asia.

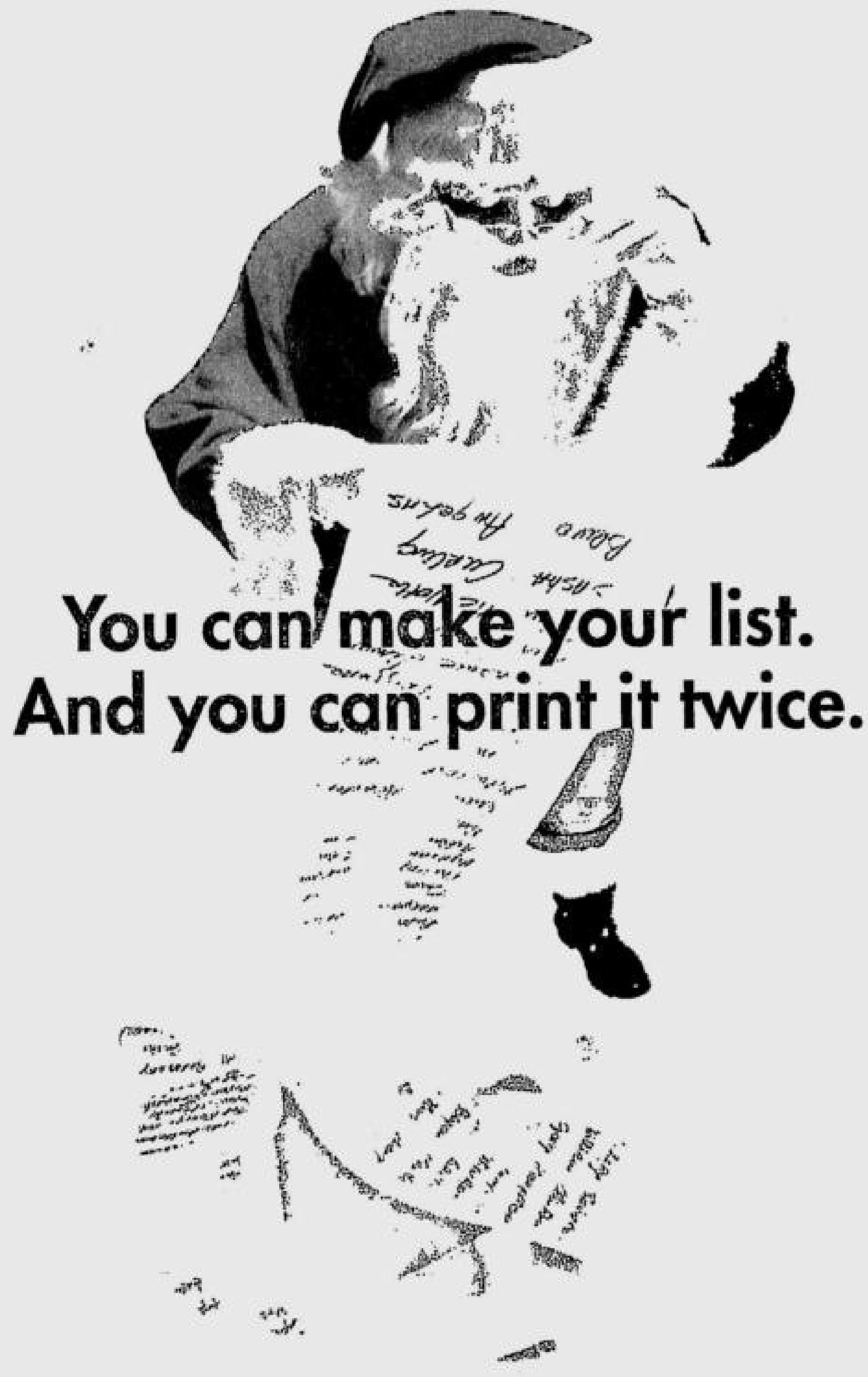
Zoellick described the Singapore negotiations as having "broken significant new ground" in the area of services and he was confident the outstanding sticking point regarding the free transfer of capital would be resolved soon.

But the legal machinations of drafting the final agreement and presenting it to Congress for approval meant it would not take effect until 2004.

"Singapore and the United States have concluded the substance of the free trade agreement we've been negotiating, except for one issue," Zoellick told a joint press conference with Singapore Trade Minister George Yeo.

"I am delighted because we have an excellent agreement. It's a comprehensive agreement . . . I'm also particularly pleased that this will be our first free trade agreement with an Asian country." The detailed nature of the negotiations also included Singapore easing up on its decade-long ban on chewing gum, although neither Zoellick nor Yeo gave details.

AFP



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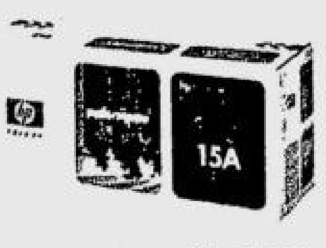

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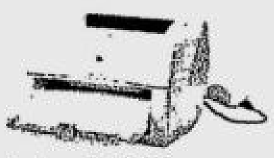

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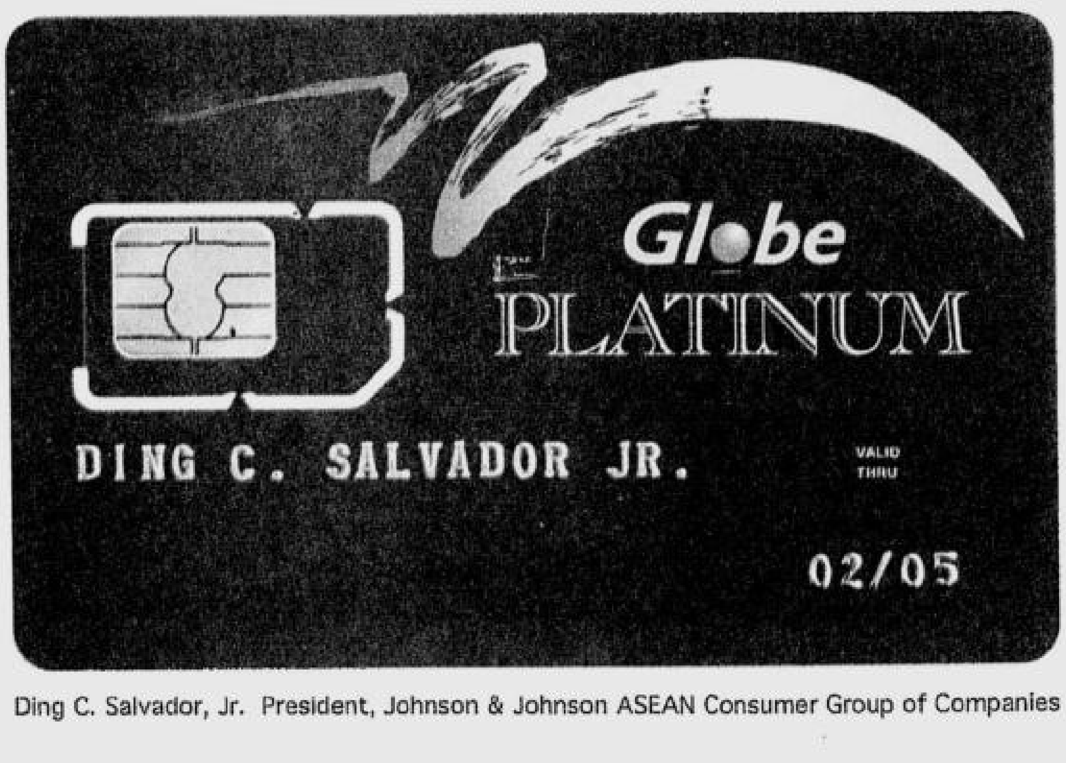

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3 MASTER OF DISGUISE
4 CLOCKSTOPPER
5 HIBLA
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2 OPENS NOV. 27- DIE ANOTHER DAY
3 OPENS NOV. 27- DIE ANOTHER DAY
4 GISING NA SI ADAN

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4 HIBLA
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‘Double Exposure’ with Side A and Freestyle in Baguio

BAGUIO City rocks this month with an adrenaline-pumping live concert featuring top music acts Side A and Freestyle, Nov. 23.

MaQ Productions presents "Double Exposure," at 8 p.m. on Saturday at the University of Baguio Gym.

The show headlines two popular bands whose music and performances never fail to captivate audiences in the live concert and lounge circuits.

Side A, composed of hitmakers Naldy Gonzales on keyboards, Joey Benin on bass, Kelly Badon on lead guitar, Joey Generoso on lead vocals and Ernie Severino on drums, is a chart-topping act whose musicality conjures a soothing, rocking, romantic blend of pop, rock and R&B with infectious grooves. Their live performance resonates with a youthful, vibrant energy.

Freestyle is composed of six, young and talented Davao-based musicians who dish out a stylish brand of pop, R&B music, with a touch of sleek jazz.

Members are Jinky Vidal on vocals, Top Suzara on vocals and rhythm guitar, Tat Suzara on lead guitar, Carlo Tapia on bass, Nikki Cabardo on keyboards and Gerald Banzon on drums.

"Double Exposure" is presented by Close-Up, Sinutab, Bonamine, Ponstan, Listerine, Bactidol and co-presented by Camp John Hay Development Corp., Camp John Hay Manor, Le Souffle, Forest House Bar and Bistro and Waltrix.

Official concert station is HB-FM 1039.

Also supporting the event are media partners Yes-FM 101.1 and Crossover 105.1.

The concert is a benefit for the Girl Scouts of the Philippines Baguio City Council and the Alay sa Kalinisan (ASK) Baguio City.

Tickets are at P600, P400 and P200.

Araneta Center

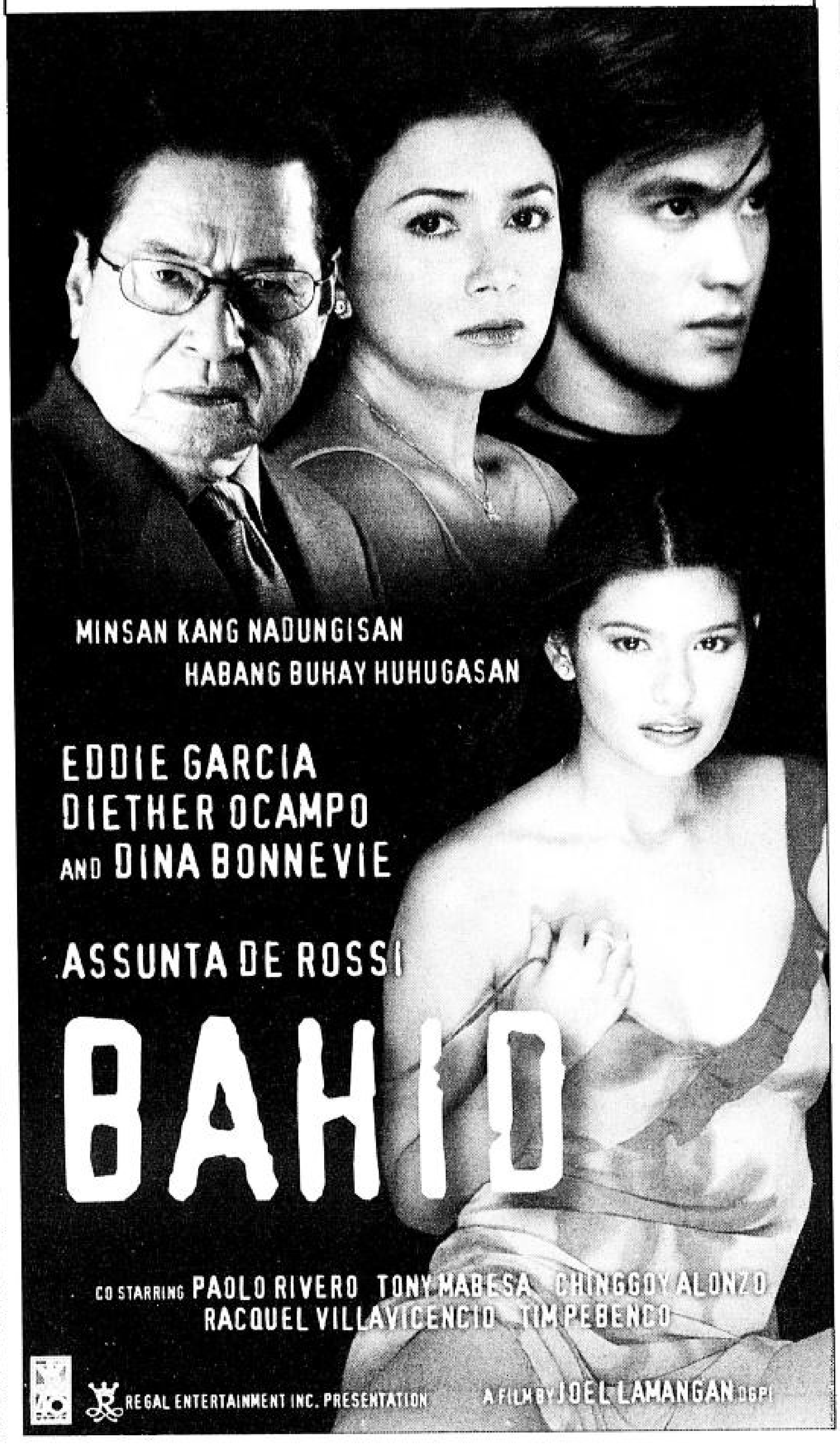
ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

ALI MALL CINEPLEX 7	
Ali 1	KAILANGAN KITA
Ali 2	HIBLA
Ali 3	TRANSPORTER
Ali 4	HARRY POTTER 2
Ali 5	GHOST SHIP
Ali 6	BRAZEN WOMEN
Ali 7	BIYAHERA
FARMERS PLAZA CINEMAS	
Farmers 1	GISING NA SI ADAN
Farmers 2	HARRY POTTER 2
ARANETA COLISEUM	
NOV. 20,22	BAKBAKAN NAT'L 7 STAG DERBY
NOV.23	JOHNSONS CHEERING COMPETITION
NOV 24	PBA GAMES
ELEPHANT WORLD	
NOV. 20	10:00 AM / 1:00 PM
NOV. 21	10:00 AM / 3:00 PM
NOV 22	10:00AM / 3:00 PM

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	TUKAHAN / BIRTHDAY GIRL
ODEON	HARRY POTTER
ODEON-2	HIBLA
ROBEN	GISING NA SI ADAN
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	HIGH RISK VOODOO
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET-2	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
QUEZON-1	GISING NA SI ADAN
REMAR	BIYAHERA
REMAR-2	GISING NA SI ADAN
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	HIBLA
B	GISING NA SI ADAN
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	THE TRANSPORTER
CINEMA-2	HARRY POTTER 2
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	GISING NA SI ADAN
CINEMA-2	BIYAHERA
CINEMA-3	KAILANGAN KITA
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	HARRY POTTER
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	GHOST SHIP
CINEMA-6	SEX FILES
CINEMA-7	MASARAP NA PUGAD
CINEMA-8	HARRY POTTER
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	HARRY POTTER
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	HARRY POTTER
CINEMA-11(SDDS)	CLOCK STOPPERS
CINEMA-12	HIBLA
CINEMA-14	BARZEN WOMEN
CINEMA-15	KAILANGAN KITA
LORES	
CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN	
CINEMA 1	MR DEEDS
CINEMA 2	9 MORNINGS
CINEMA 3	BESTMAN
CINEMA 4	K-19
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARANAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

OPENS NOVEMBER 27 !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HABANG BUHAY HUHUGASAN
EDDIE GARCIA
DIETHER OCAMPO
AND DINA BONNEVIE
ASSUNTA DE ROSSI
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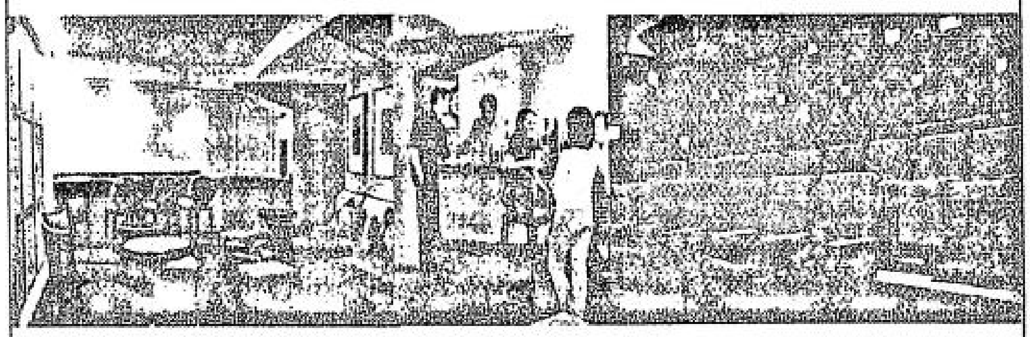

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1	HARRY POTTER AND THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS	12:30 FS/1:00 MF/4:20/7:40/ 10:30 LFS/11:00 LMF/1:50 END
2	HARRY POTTER AND THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS	11:50 FS/12:20 MF/3:40/7:00/ 9:50 LFS/10:20 LMF/1:10 END

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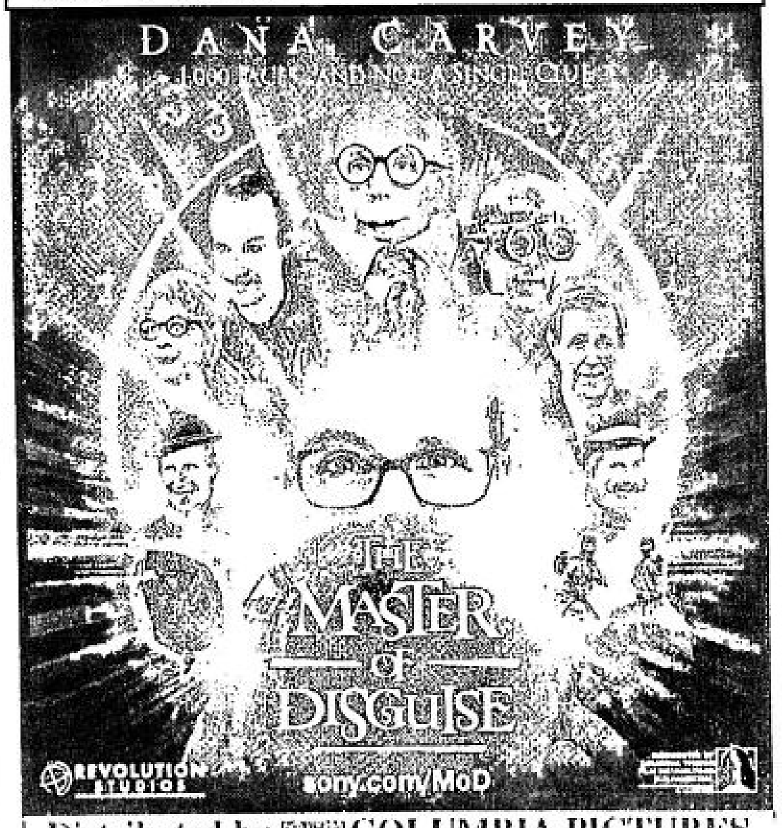
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john apacible
simon ibarra
and gladys reyes
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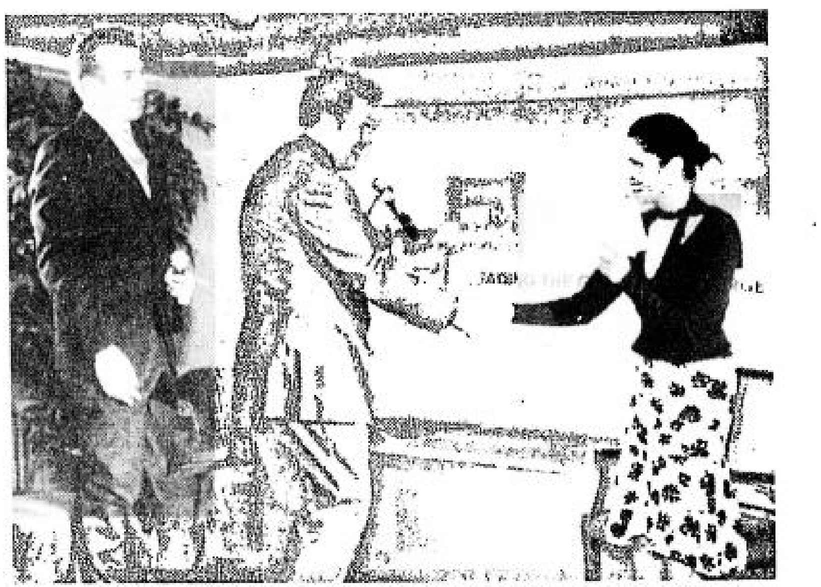
yda manzano
jeanette joaquin
stella l.
and gardo versoza
BIYAHERA
written & directed by joven m. tan
STRICTLY FOR ADULTS ONLY!
Executive Producer: RODERICK SANTO
METRO FILMS
a METRO FILMS PRESENTATIO

Dream Broadcasting launches interactive service

DREAM Broadcasting System recently cast magic over an unsuspecting number of guests and friends as it launched the exciting pan-Asian digital interactive service of Dream-M@gic Systems, in a well-attended cocktail event dubbed "Dream's Got Magic," at the plush Discovery Suites.

Hosted by singer Agot Isidro who also rendered a few songs, the event also featured interactive high technology presentations from M@gicBox, Nokia, and OpenTV, that gave the audience a preview of things to come.



AGOT Isidro welcomes event speakers Mika Hoffren (left) of Nokia Home Communications and Richard Franklin of Open TV.

This would include entertainment and interactive programming, where viewers can change or influence what they watch.

The array of services enables viewers to enjoy all the Dream TV and audio channels, pay-as-you-use access, Pay Per View movies, on-demand news, games, movies, beauty and fitness tips, astrology, local information and an on-screen TV guide.

It is said that the Dream-M@gic interactive TV (iTV) services takes its cue from digital and iTV services launched some years ago in the UK and France, which is currently being tested and launched in the United States and the rest of Europe.

How does this work? iTV allows a viewer to see regular TV shows and use their remote control to click onto additional information, play along live with their favorite game shows, trade stocks, do banking on TV or shop during commercials for home delivery.

It has already taken the US and Europe by storm and the US Government recently ordered that all TVs sold in America be fully digital by 2010, in order for consumers to take advantage of this new technology.

But why would viewers want to shop in front of their TV?

A partnership with Standard Chartered and MasterCard has already been inked with Magic Holdings Ltd. to make home shopping easy, convenient and timely. Viewers are empowered to make purchases when they think of them, while watching TV and using their remote control.

M@gic has chosen the Philippines as its first launch market, being one of the most sophisticated and vibrant markets in the world.

The system will also be introduced in Thailand, India, Malaysia and China immediately following the Philippine launch.

Consumers have a choice to avail of the system via service plans.

Philippine Multimedia Systems, Inc. is now offering a "Loyalty Bonus Plan" that allows a limited number of new subscribers to receive the monthly service fee, free of charge, by signing up for a Dream premium plan and paying a small sign-on fee.

Other customers can purchase their own digital STB and pay the full Dream-M@gic service fee to receive the service.

As for the hardware, the M@gic system includes a credit card, use of a set-top box and remote control (by Nokia), a mini, dish and interactive content.

Attending the cocktail were M@gicBox Holdings Ltd. Chairman and CEO Anthony Desir, Nokia product and sales support manager (Asia Pacific) Mika Hoffren, Dream CEO Cesar Reyes, and Richard Frankland, senior business development manager for OpenTV in the Asia Pacific region.

The Dream-M@gic System will become available in early 2003.

OPENS NOVEMBER 27!
DIANA DIDN'T BARE IT ALL ON EDSA
BUT IN "KASIPING," SHE DOES!
Love thy neighbor, but not thy neighbor's wife!
DIANA ZUBIRI HALINA PEREZ
RODEL VELAYO introducing DANTE BALBOA
GISELLE SANCHEZ LONG MEJIA
KASIPING
a SEIKO Films presentation Directed by AUGUSTO SALVADOR

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HARRY POTTER & THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS GP 11:10,2:30,5:50,9:10	KAILANGAN KITA P13 12:40,2:55,5:10,7:25,9:40	HARRY POTTER & THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS GP 12:00,3:20,6:40,10:00

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GP
CINEMA 2
HARRY POTTER
12:00, 3:20,
6:35, 9:50
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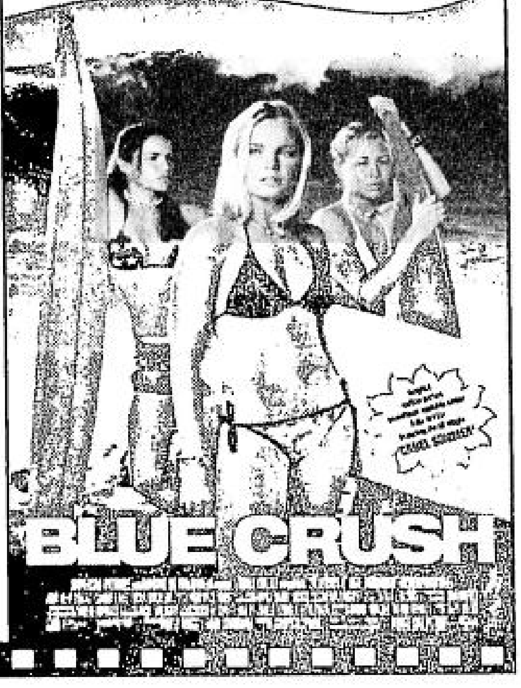

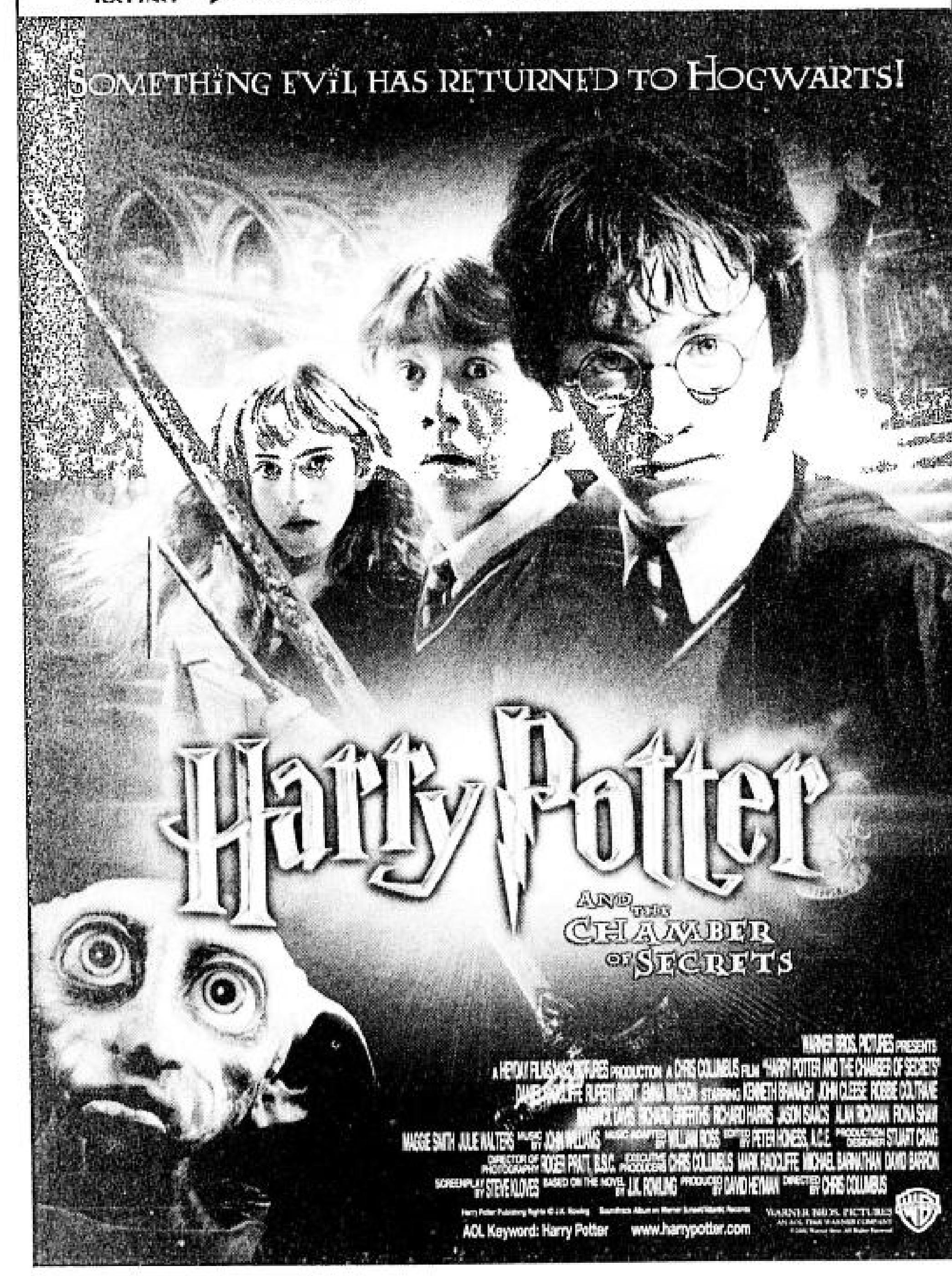
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-YAM LARANAS, Director
ISANG OBRA MAESTRA SA LARANGAN NG SINING.
LIKHANG TAGUMPAY SA LARANGAN NG PELIKULA.

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pelikula ni Yam Laranas
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"A moving canvas..." -EUGENE DE ASIS, People's Journal
"A visually appealing and well-crafted film..." -ALEX BROSAS, Manila Times
"More than good cinematography, Yam Laranas captures the chemistry and sensuality of Rica and Maui onscreen!" -WALDEN BELEN, Manila Bulletin
"Truly refreshing..." -DANNY VIBAS, Manila Times
" Rica and Maui in their daringest!" -CES EVANGELISTA, Insider
"Panalo talaga ang Hibla!" -NORA CALDERON, Remate / Balita
"Beautifully photographed!" -RICKY CALDERON, Today
"Pinaka-daring na movie ni Rica. Wala na syang itinatago! " -DONDON SERMINO, Abante
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Ben Affleck Matt Damon Chris Moore
present
project greenlight's
STOLEN SUMMER
THE MOVIE

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The Coffee Club Session
is on Nov. 22 - 7:30 PM.
Tickets will be available at the gate.
Stolen Summer by writer/director Pete Jones is the winner of the amateur filmmaking competition Project Greenlight. Kevin Pollak, Aidan Quinn, Brian Dennehy, and child actor Max Weinberg stars in the story about a Catholic boy and a Jewish boy. When the Jewish boy finds out he's dying, he works with his friend to figure out how he can make sure he gets into heaven.
MTRCB Rating: Parental Guidance 13 (PG-13)
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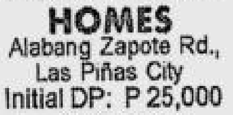

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QUEZON CITY

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LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is given that the estate of the late AGRIPINA B. RODRIGUEZ consisting of real property was extrajudicially settled among her heirs as per Doc 151079 Page 35 Bk 2 S of 2002 of the R.P. Consulate, Malaysia & Doc 483 Page 98 Bk XXIV S of 2002 of Notary Public Rodolfo C. Sabio of QC (PDI-Nov. 6,13&20,2002)

NOTICE is hereby given that the estate of the late DIEGO H. GUTIERREZ was settled extrajudicially by the heirs as per deed of extrajudicial settlement and adjudication per Doc. No. 320, Page No. 64, Book No. V, Series of 2002, before Atty. Jinky H. Cruz, Notary Public, Manila.
(PDI-Nov. 13, 20 & 27, 2002)

PUBLIC NOTICES

• LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given tha the estate of the late Sps. Antonio P. Martin & Araceli B. Martin who died on Sept 3, 2002 & March 13, 2002 has been extrajudicially settled among their heirs as pe Doc. # 465; Page # 93; Book XVIII; Series of 2002 before Notary Public Atty. Ruth R Aldaba of Las Pinas City. (PDI-Nov. 13. 20 & 27. 2002)

NOTICE OF LOSS

Lost FEU Stock Certificates of DOLORES GLORIA Nos. 30867 (60Sh.), 22809 (1Sh.). 29495 (10Sh.), 21530 (1Sh.). 17131 (1Sh.), 8550 (3Sh PDI-Nov. 6, 13 & 20, 2002

Notice is given that RFM Stock Cert. #31559 3000shares unde the name of Jocelyn Ngo has bee lost PDI-Nov. 13, 20 & 27, 2002

Notice is given that the S2 Lic #601089 under the name of Dra. Stella Guerrero Manalc was lost. (PDI-Nov. 20, 2002)

Notice is given that the S2 License #1923153R under the name of Dra. Alexis L. Reyes was lost. (PDI-Nov. 20, 2002)

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COL. CARLOS T. GALVEZ

has joined his Creator on November 19, 2002
at the age of 90.

His loving wife **Meding** (†); children **Marie & Eddie, Sonny & Mercy, Lita & Alex**; grandchildren, great grandchildren and other relatives request prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at St. Alphonsus Mary de Liguori Chapel, Magallanes Village, Makati City.

Cremation will be on Thursday, November 21, 2002 at the Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque City after the 3:00 p.m. Mass at the St. Alphonsus Mary de Liguori Chapel.

Ma. Socorro C. Macapagal-Santos

Peacefully joined our Creator
on November 16, 2002 at the age of 43.

Her beloved son, **Anton Joshua**, with her loved ones, **Andrew & Boy**, together with her loving family, **Papang, Mamang, Susie, Sally & Paul, Jun & Jorja, John & Pam**, niece & nephews, relatives & friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Loyola Memorial Chapels,
Premiere I, Guadalupe, Makati City.

Cremation will be on November 21, Thursday,
after the 7:00 a.m. Mass.

Burial of ashes will be on the same day
at 1:00 p.m., at Mt. Carmel Shrine,
New Manila, Q.C.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
❶ Copy of Death Certificate
❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT
MESSAGE OF THANKS
DEATH ANNIVERSARY
REQUIEMS
FREE OBIT DESIGN

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Jose "Boy" Macias Montaño

(Jan. 23, 1936 – Nov. 13, 2002)
Former Dipolog City Councilor
and Zamboanga Del Norte Board Member,
Peacefully joined our Lord on November 13, 2002 at the age of 66.

His bereaved wife, **Herminia**; children and children-in-law, **Connie, Tess & Jeff, Mary Anne & Scott, Maridol & James, Gigi & Farzad, Carrie & Mao**; grandchildren, **JM, Paul, Maria, Joe, Tony, Nick, Bella, Brie, Gianna, Mickie, Alexa, Iza, Carissa, Carmella, Catrina, Daniella & Jose**; brother, **Nick**; and sisters, **Teresita & Dolores**; and all relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at his home in Turno, Dipolog City.

Interment will be on Nov. 22, 2002 after the 9:30 a.m. Mass at North Zamboanga Gardens, Conacon, Polanco, Zamboanga Del Norte.

For further information, please call (02) 212-2824.

We remember and pray for the eternal rest of the soul of our dear

ILUMINADA "LUMING" S. BERNARDO

on her 3rd Death Anniversary
on November 21, 2002.

Masses for the repose of her soul will be offered in the following churches:

6:00 a.m.
Sta. Clara, Quezon City
Lourdes Church, Quezon City
San Jose de Trozo, Manila
Pink Sisters Convent (New Manila), Quezon City
Sto. Domingo Church, Quezon City
Mt. Carmel Church, Quezon City

10:00 a.m.
St. Anne (Hagonoy)

> *I have fought the good fight. I have finished the race. I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day — and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for His appearing.*
>
> *2 Tim 4:7-8*

ISABEL DINAMARCA ANDAL

of Balayan, Batangas
1917-2002
entered into glory to be with her Lord and Master
on **November 19, 2002**

Her children **Leopoldo** and **Ma. Corazon, Aurora** and **Robert, Catalina** and **Ralph, Ma. Belen** and **Davie, Moy, Resty** and **Judy, Lee, Ower** and **Melinda, Fe** and **Tony**; grandchildren and great grandchildren wish to inform relatives and friends that her body lies in state at the Andal Family residence at Damballelos St., Balayan, Batangas.

Interment will be at 9 a.m. Friday, on November 22, 2002 at Gethsemane Memorial Park, Balayan, Batangas.

PHILIP L. MARIANO

of Manila and Jose Panganiban,
Camarines Norte
Peacefully joined our Lord
on November 18, 2002 at the age of 72.

His bereaved wife, **Priscilla**; children, **Rico & Naning, Borce & Gina, Rey & Dette, Francis & Precy**; grandchildren; brothers, **Goying, Monching, Paquito**; sisters, **Gloria & Tere** and all relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Funeraria Paz, Quezon City and will be brought to Jose Panganiban on November 21.

Interment will be on Novemer 26,
2002 in Jose Panganiban,
Camarines Norte.

Jaime Casañas Duremdes

of Calapan, Oriental Mindoro
November 26, 1934 - November 17, 2002

His wife **Evelia**; sister **Gloria D. Caedo**; children **Ma. Perpetua Michelle** and **David George Abbass, Gerard Randolph** and **Jannette, Jaivel Lawrence, Julliette Consuelo** and **Jonathan Acedo, Carlo Chameal; Jovy** and **Jonathan**; grandchildren **Nicholas, Thomas, Zachariah** and **Mary Margaret**; brothers- and sister-in-law, nephews and nieces request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at the Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Friday, November 22, 2002 at 8:00 a.m. at the Himlayang Pilipino, Tandang Sora, Quezon City.

Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

Matthew 10:39

In Loving Memory

on the First Death Anniversary of

ENGR. DAVID GUZMAN BAUTISTA

who passed away on November 23, 2001.

All relatives and friends are invited to join in celebrating his memory with prayers and dinner at the family residence in Quezon City, Friday, November 22, 2002 at 6:00 p.m.

Masses will be offered on November 23, 2002 at 6:00 p.m. at the following churches: San Pedro Bautista, Sto. Domingo and St. Jude.

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INTERMENT NOTICE

Name	Date of Interment	Time	Place of Interment	Place of Wake
FRANCISCA S. MANIMTIM	Nov. 20	2:00 PM	Holy Gardens Memorial Park Taytay, Rizal	Lanete St., Taytay, Rizal
SOLITA R. BAARDE	Nov. 21	2:00 PM	Holy Gardens Memorial Park Angono, Rizal	Bo Road Tayuman, Binangonan, Rizal
ERLINDA G. IBAÑEZ	Nov. 21	10:00 AM	Holy Gardens Memorial Park Angono, Rizal	267 Doña Aurora St., Angono, Rizal
ENRIQUE C. UNIDAD	Nov. 21	3:00 PM	Holy Gardens Memorial Park Angono, Rizal	258 E. Dela Paz St., Angono, Rizal
PATROCINIO C. COSTALES	Nov. 21	8:00 AM	Holy Gardens La Union Memorial Park San Fernando City La Union	Bonifacio St., Ilocanos Sur San Fernando City

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AUREA QUIOGUE FUNERAL HOMES
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CEBU ROLLING HILLS MEMORIAL CHAPELS INC.
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COSMOPOLITAN FUNERAL HOMES, INC.
Nivel Hills, Lahug, Cebu City, Tels. 231-0721; 231-3192
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Inflexible finance officer resists change

By Tita Datu Puangco

Advice
FOR THE
ANXIOUS PERSON
AT WORK

I FOLLOW your column on a regular basis, as it is very insightful and informative, especially for budding entrepreneurs like me. I own and manage a manufacturing company that is five years old. To be competitive, I plan to reorganize the firm and fix our organizational set-up to make it more efficient.

I have an officer in my team who is, without a doubt, very efficient and trustworthy. Considering she is not an accountant, she competently manages our funds. Almost a pioneer in my office, she is, however, becoming annoyingly pessimistic. She has offered to resign, but I refused as she handles finance, a highly sensitive position and is one of my most trusted lieutenants. The problem is she opposes almost all changes including the reorganization.

This changeover has been very trying for me because of her. She doesn't approve of all these since in her own words, "We are still a small firm." Our workforce is close to 45 people and she thinks changes will just further drain our limited financial resources. She prefers the employees to be doing what they have been doing for years; unfortunately, that runs counter to our plan of having departments focus on their own responsibilities.

I feel I have created a "monster" as I gave her too many sensitive tasks. She doesn't trust almost all my staff as she finds them highly inefficient. She has a few friends at work. Inside the office, it's like war or soap opera with her every working day. Outside, she seems to have another personality and lights up. Does this mean she doesn't fit in the company anymore? Is she "forcing" me to accept her offer? Is it time to let her go and accept her offer to step down? If I don't let her go, how do I address my problem? I tried a lot of things already to boost morale and instill camaraderie in the office. Many of my employees, however, say that one way or another, she spoils the fun. If it were a democracy, she would have been booted out a long time ago. Please help.

Frustrated Entrepreneur

Based on your letter, I can sense that your firm is moving from an entrepreneurial start-up where everyone does everything and therefore has very little need of organization. This means you have to move to the systematizing stage. This requires that the organizational structure and core processes be more clearly defined so as to give the enterprise a level of predictability.

Manage change

Your move to reorganize ensures consistent, reliable and excellent service to customers thus spurring further growth. What you have to do at this stage is to manage the change. It is important for you as the leader to demonstrate the political will or commitment to the change.

This means aligning the thinking of your finance officer to the change you desire. If your finance officer stays, she has to tow the line around the major changes. I suggest a heart-to-heart talk so you can share with her your thoughts around the reorganization. Impress on her the need to make the new organization work. Ask her help to make it succeed. Then, demonstrate to her why you think the new structure is feasible and affordable.

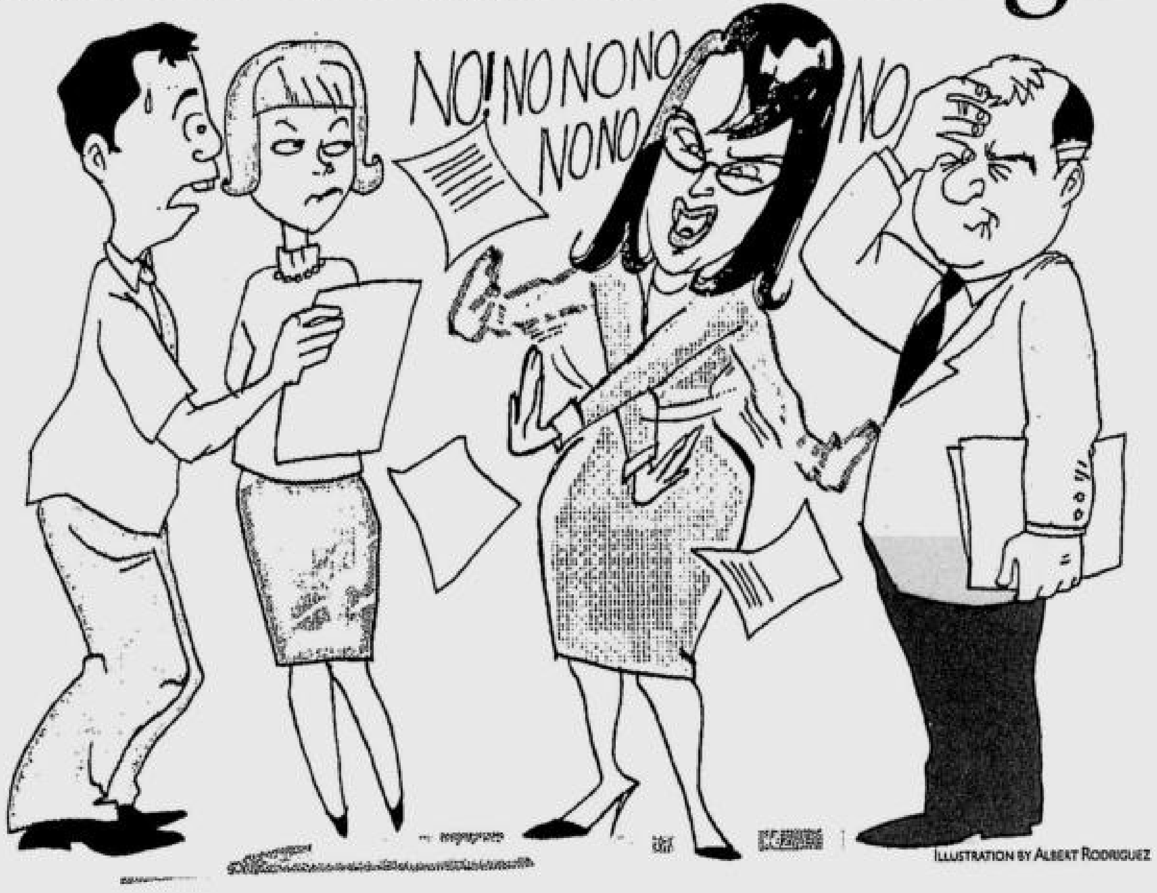

ILLUSTRATION BY ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

Succession plan

As a development area for you, try to be more hands-on in the finance area. As entrepreneurs, we may have the tendency to delegate this critical aspect of the enterprise, as we tend to be more focused on production and marketing. Take an active interest. In my own company, we employ an external auditor who provides the check and balance needed in the area of finance. Do you have one?

It is also true, that as an enterprise grows, some people who may be helpful at one stage of the enterprise have difficulty coping with growth. The reason may be the inability to move from their comfort zones or their inability to learn new competencies and create dynamism needed in their area. In this case, if the officer refuses to shift her mindset, then you have no choice but to let her go for the good of the company.

If you get to the point where you have to part ways, it is important to ensure proper succession and turnover so as not to adversely affect operations. Then, demonstrate esteem and recognition for her contributions to the organization by caring gestures. It would be great to give her a "going away" financial gift and a despedida. Remember, showing gratitude is always cherished in our culture. Based on my experience, your friendship need not diminish simply because she no longer works for you, as the saying goes, "it never pays to burn your bridges." May you have the courage to do what is right in your situation.

(Ms Puangco is CEO and president of Ancilla Enterprise Development Consulting. Send comments, feedback or requests for advice through e-mail to ancillaedc@pacific.net.ph or fax to 892-2902.)

BREAKFAST CHAT

How to create a strong brand

By Ricky B. Garcia

BRANDS are not built overnight. To create and keep a good brand, strategic planning has to be consistently and relentlessly done. Behind any powerful brand are detailed plans on how to improve advertising, enhance current professional practice and contribute to the development of the brand.

In the recent People at Work segment in Studio 23's breakfast, program host Ria Tanjuatco and Celine Madamba, Inquirer corporate relations manager, interviewed Inez Reyes, the vice president for Marketing of Jollibee Corporation on how to develop a good brand. Here is the gist of the interview.

PaW: What makes a brand unique and important to its target market?

Inez: If you had two hamburgers, with the same look, same taste and the same price-one had no brand name, the other was branded "Jollibee," which one would you buy? I guess the answer is obvious-you would buy the branded one. And the reason is that, given the similar physical attributes, a brand name gives the consumer the psychological assurance of quality that he is looking for. A good brand has certain specific associations or attributes developed over time-these specific, unique associations are what make the brand stand out in its own category and in the minds of consumers, and what drives consumers to choose one brand over another.

JOLLIBEE with Ria Tanjuatco (from left), Inez Reyes and Celine Madamba
PHOTO RICKY GARCIA

PaW: What are the key factors to a strong brand?

Inez: In every product category, there is what you call the market leader, and this is typically the strongest brand. If you think about all these strong brands-for example, in fastfood, Jollibee; beverages, Coke; beer, San Miguel; malls, ShoeMart-to name a few, I believe these are some of their commonalities: a clear image, consistent communication of that image to its target market, real and consistent product attributes or benefits, and industry or category innovation leadership.

PaW: How do you communicate the brand in an interactive world?

Inez: Currently, we see interactive media as a good source of customer feedback. We have a Customer Care Hotline, a website, and consumers can also text in their feedback to us.

PaW: Could you tell us some market trends now?

Inez: Generally, there's the trend called viral marketing where you could use text messaging as a platform for marketing campaigns; there's also events marketing as another non-traditional tool. Specific to the fastfood industry, we see the consumers becoming more demanding and discriminating-given the extremely wide variety of choices one has. The industry has become so competitive and dynamic. The recent "chicken war" (as some columnists have referred to it), is an example of the degree of competitiveness of our industry.

PaW: What is the best way to handle brands in decline, under protest and undergoing some sort of crisis?

Inez: For brands in decline, consider a re-launch. This has been done many times in many industries, with much success. Essentially, this just means developing a clearer, more relevant brand positioning and reconnecting with your target market in a more effective way. For brands under protest or undergoing some sort of crisis, you would need to analyze the situation very carefully and use a lot of tools-like a combination of media advertising and corporate or public relations blitzes-to address the issues raised against the brand.

PaW: What is the impact of advertising to one's brand?

Inez: For fast-moving consumer products like Jollibee, advertising is integral to our marketing campaigns. We communicate to a broad spectrum of consumers and we need to reach them in many dimensions-in the store through merchandising, while at home thru TV, while on the road thru radio, and even thru print. Constantly communicating with our consumers or customers keeps the brand fresh and exciting, and makes them want to visit our stores and partake of our current and new products. We had a very well received campaign recently for our Chickenjoy, and we just launched some new ads for our latest product, which was a huge success-the Jolly Twirl Crunch.

PaW: How do you measure communication effectiveness to attain corporate goals?

Inez: We have specific communication metrics or targets that we aim for and this is regularly monitored, tracked and analyzed through a customized survey. The results of the survey form the basis for our action plans and strategies. We just saw indications of very significant improvements in business and communication effectiveness goals, coming from all our recent marketing efforts.

PaW: Any key points to remember on how to create and keep a great brand?

Inez: Have a clear and relevant positioning, consistently deliver on the product benefits promised, consistently communicate with your target market, aim for constant improvement, and always keep the brand fresh and exciting.

Stair-stepping to achieve your goals

By Connie Schmitt

JOB coaches and other career experts often compare the goal-setting process to a strenuous mountain expedition. However, you don't have to be a mountaineer to set and achieve goals-though it helps to think like one. If your goal is intimidating as climbing Mt. Everest, do what expert climbers do and break the expedition down into steps.

1. Picture your own mountain.

Pick a goal and make it specific. Make sure you can measure your success. This is easy for mountain climbers-they can find photos of the summits they would like to climb. Your goal should be just as easily visualized.

For instance, if you want to increase your productivity at work, note that you want to increase your sales by 10 percent by the end of a certain time period. Write down everything so you can see where you've been and how far you've come.

2. Make your own motivation.

Who knows why expert climbers choose to hike through mind-numbing temperatures? Only they can explain their personal motivation. In order to achieve your personal mountain, it helps to know why you are going through all the hard work and effort. Sometimes we don't even understand what we want and why we want it.

The best way to figure all this out is to put it on paper. Write down why you want to achieve your goal. List all ways you will personally benefit from achieving the goal. This will get you pumped up. Plus, if your goal is long-term, there is the possibility of going off-course. If you hit a plateau, you can grab your list and remind yourself what the hard work is all about.

3. Start training.

Mountain climbers don't just strap on an oxygen tank and hike a mile into the sky. They have to make sure they are in peak physical condition. They start at the gym with a backpack and a Stairmaster. Analyze exactly where you are now in reaching your goal. Note the strengths that will help you, the weaknesses that could hurt you and the opportunities you can use to attain what you want. Don't be frustrated if you are not as far along as you expected. Knowing just how far you have to go to reach a goal is half the battle.

4. Assess the risk.

Every goal requires you to invest or risk something. When climbing a mountain, you invest a lot of time and money. Part of the thrill of climbing into thin air is that you risk your life. In your own personal goals, know what you're investing and what you're risking. If your goal is finding a new job, know that you're looking at a two-to-three hour a day commitment. The risk is that the new job could make you less satisfied than the one you left. If you're gunning for a major promotion, understand you might trade off free time for a larger paycheck. Whether it's time, money or something else, know what reaching your goal could cost you. Every successful person has traded something for his or her success. Find out what you are ready to give up.

5. Gather supplies.

Hikers estimate how long it will take them to reach the summit and they pack supplies accordingly. They have to have enough food to maintain energy but they also have to be able to carry it. Determine what you need to learn in order to reach your goal. Will you need to take classes to learn a new skill? What kind of information do you need access to? If your goal is to switch careers, you might have to go back to school. If you want to find a new job, you know you'll need a resume and cover letter. Those are just the beginning. Realize that you may need additional help.

6. Get a mountain guide.

Even seasoned climbers hire a Sherpa to climb Mt. Everest. In your personal goal setting, identify all the people who can serve as your support group. If you are trying to gain a promotion at work, join a professional group. If your goal is to get a new job, join a job search group. Find a mentor who can help you plan your goals and who will be ready to give you a hand or throw you a lifeline. Consider talking to a career coach. Guidance may also come in the form of emotional support from family and friends. Let everyone know about your job search. It's okay to admit the struggle you're going through. The people closest to you can be your best ally when the going gets tough.

7. Plan a path and get going.

You can't climb a mountain in a day. Break your journey down into smaller steps, think of them as different camps and set a specific deadline for reaching each of the smaller goals. Start at base camp and work your way up to the summit. If you're trying to land a new job, make your first goal identifying 100 potential employers in your area. After you reach that goal, make a new one, so on and so forth. Set a deadline you can achieve and get going.

8. Celebrate.

Success is sweet so learn to celebrate the small stuff. Give yourself a reward when you reach each new camp and a final reward when you reach your final goal. This will help you enjoy the process and keep you motivated.

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email: peopleatwork@inquirer.com.ph
PEOPLE at WORK
Editor Raul O. Marcelo ◎ Subsection Editor Regina Galang Reyes

Learn to negotiate at work

WORKING WOUNDED

Bob Rosner

Dear WW: Another guy and I are jointly responsible for a project. I'm frustrated because it's clear to me what needs to be done, but I can't convince him to do it my way. Any tips for how I can bring him around to my point of view?

Up Against A Tough Cookie

You think you face a tough cookie? Think about your average two-year old. Who wants to jump on the sofa. When his mother has told him not to. Now, he's really got a hurdle to get over! Unfortunately, Adonis Gomez took that hurdle all too literally. After mom told him not to jump, he climbed up on the sofa and began to bounce--higher and higher 'til he'd bounced himself right out the window of his third floor apartment. Not to worry, though. Adonis sailed through the New York twilight right into the waiting lap of Barbara Jones, who happened to be sitting on the sidewalk in her wheelchair.

Like Adonis you've also got a hurdle to clear, but you can't count on having someone there to spot you. You'll need to negotiate your own soft landing.

Here are some tips to help you do that. You'll find more in "Winning With Integrity" by Leigh Steinberg, the sports agent who was the model for Jerry McGuire (Villard, 1998).

1. Have you done your homework? I was born in Jersey, where everyone interrupts. (If someone doesn't interrupt me I wonder if he's really listening.) So it was quite an adjustment when I moved to the west coast where interrupting is looked on as only slightly better than a belch. Avoid my faux pas! Talk to people who know the person you're negotiating with. What's his style? What pressure is he under? What motivates him? What does he hate? Then use that info in your negotiations.

2. Do you know your limits? Before you go into your negotiation, determine your bottom line and write it on a piece of paper. That way, once you're involved in the process, you won't lose track of what you need to walk away with.

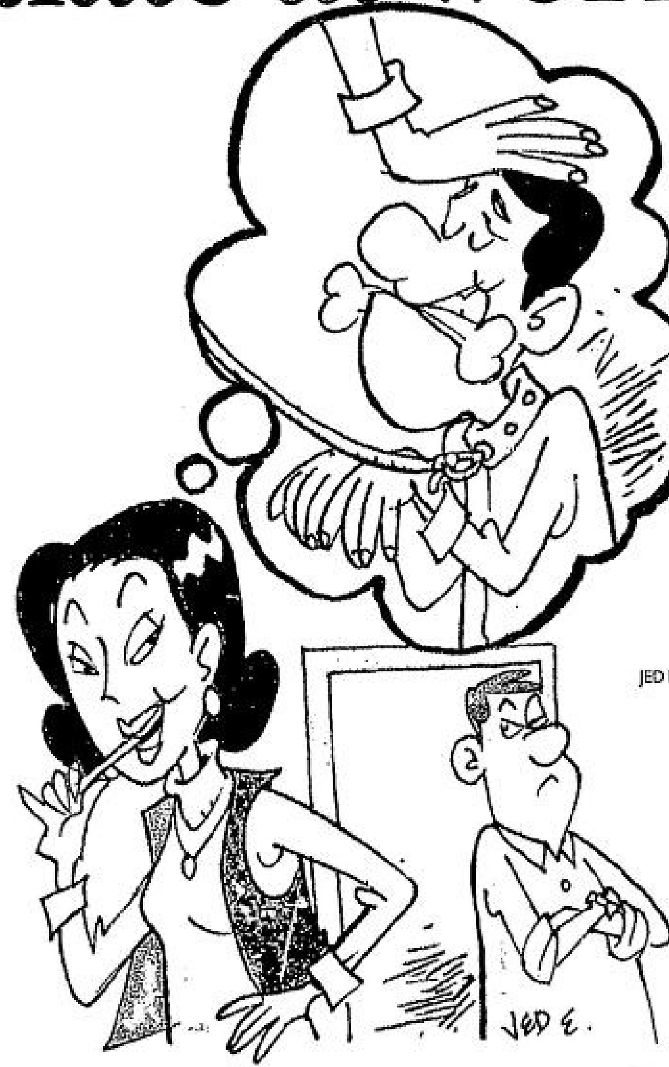
3. Are you comfortable with silence? Discomfort with silence has probably doomed more negotiations then greed. People say something damaging just to fill up the space. Be smart, be patient, and your silence can become golden.

4. Do you know when to accept a "no?" Most negotiations eventually hit a point when the other party says "no" and can't be budged. Accept the "no."

Then get creative. Use everything you've learned about the other person to create a new proposal that will meet both of your needs.

5. Have you shown the other party that he's not your only option? Nothing gives a person power in a negotiation like knowing he's the only pony you've got to ride. So (whether it's true or not), make it clear that you've got back-ups if he says no.

Hopefully, with these strategies you'll sail right through your negotiations. You'll come together and be able to both show your company the money.



JED ESTRADA

Here are the results of our last workingwounded.com/ABCnews.com poll: When you are involved in a negotiation what game do you play?

-Hardball, 18.2 percent
-Curveball, 38.1 percent
-Softball, 43.6 percent

Our winning strategy for handling a difficult negotiation with a coworker took exception with my advice. Pam A. from Covina, CA observed, "The guy in the letter signed "Up Against A Tough Cookie" doesn't want to negotiate, he wants to win! If they are 'jointly responsible,' why does he say it's 'clear to me what needs to be done' and 'convince him to do it my way.' Maybe the problem isn't the other guy in this case. This leads into how I handle difficult negotiations. I go into them believing that the other person has something to offer and may very well have the correct solution. If we try to put both of our correct solutions together, we'll come out with a plan."

(Send feedback to bob@workingwounded.com*)*

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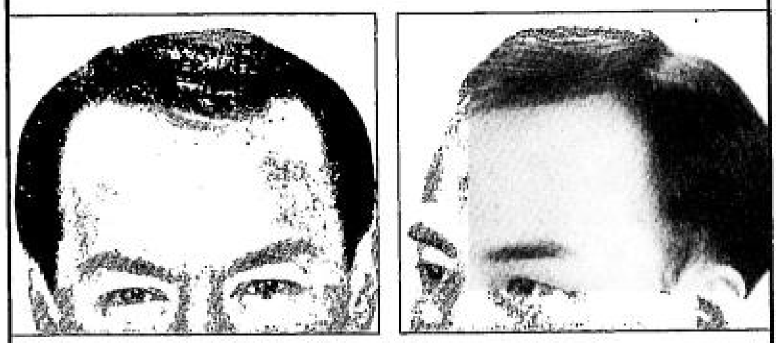

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Here are some stories. What's yours?

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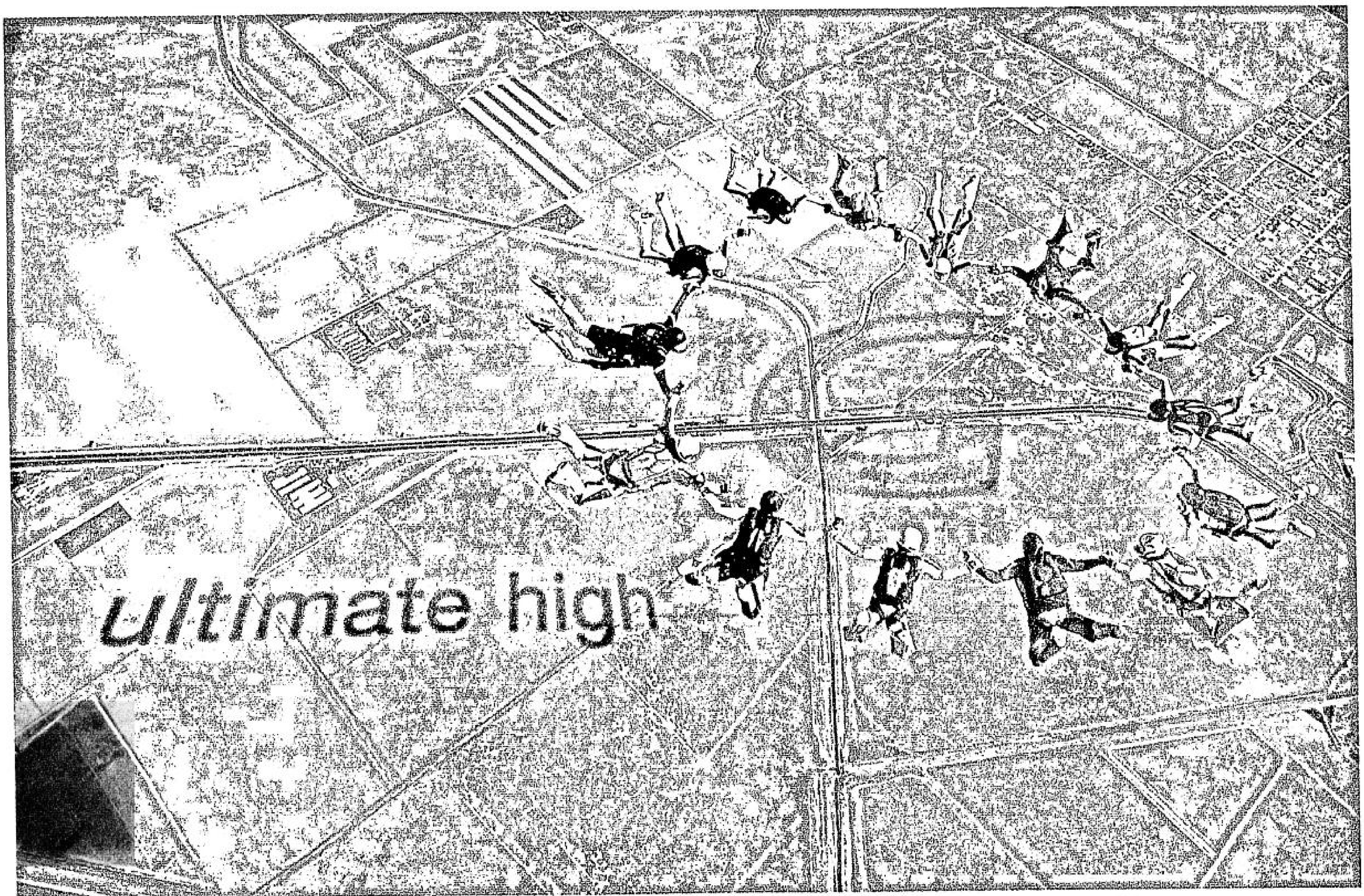

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...to have 11 fingers

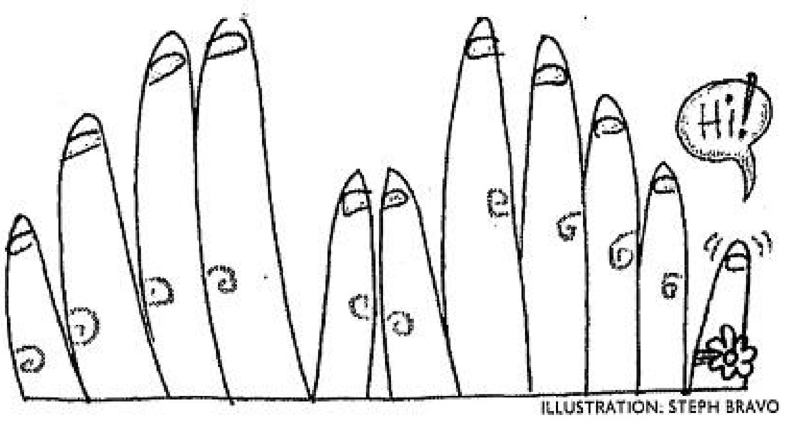


ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

By Cherrie V. Paguio
2bU! Correspondent

ON THE DAY I was born, the doctor congratulated my father, "You have a bouncing baby girl." As my father turned his back, the doctor continued, "Only, she has 11 fingers." My father faced the doctor and said, "What?," spoken like a true commercial model.

Having 11 fingers is humiliating. When I was in grade school, people called me names, which had greatly affected my self-esteem and heightened my sensitivity. To some people, it was amusing; to most, peculiar. Crying was my best defense to fight off teasers. Being born with an "extra" finger is really odd, but being teased is the most deplorable and hurting of all.

When I transferred to another school, people wouldn't immediately notice my "extra" finger. But when they'd see it dangling, they'd be aghast. It was kind of traumatic for me. Then I discovered a way of concealing it, as if I don't have it. I would usually cover it with a hanky while writing.

But it's the morning ceremonies that caused great distress, especially during "Panatang Makabayan" time. I had to oblige, especially when the discipline officer would walk beside me and stare at me like I committed a crime. But most of the time, I kept it as low as possible with the "extra" finger hidden in my collar. Being third in line had been a dilemma because every time I would raise my arm, I was ridiculed by everyone who saw my finger.

In class, I found it hard to connect with the song "Sampung mga Daliri." Some good friends of mine composed a version just for me and it goes a little something like this: "*Sampung mga daliri, kamay at paa, bilangin mo, bilangin mo, labing isa pala.*"

Kids were not as nice. When they see it, they have this innocent, disgusted look and they would touch, poke and bend it in all directions while asking, "*Ate, masakit?*" Umm... yeah!

Three times, I attempted to have it surgically removed. On my third attempt, I came close to being sedated. I ended up with a fever. Since then, I've learned to accept my extra finger, especially when it saved my life.

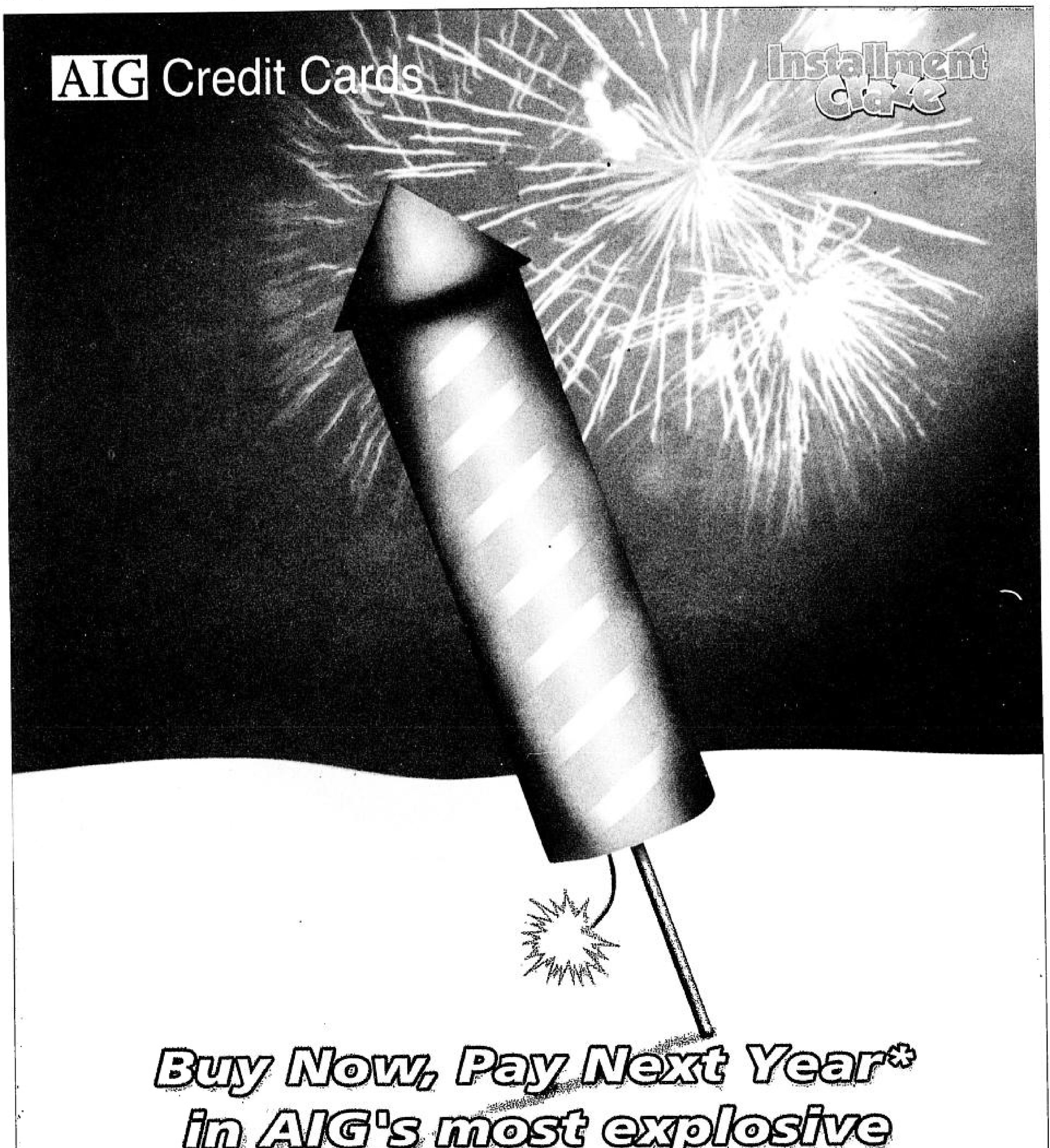
When my friend and I were riding in a jeep, there were no other passengers. When it suddenly stopped, we were pushed toward the front part of the jeep. If I didn't have an extra finger, which served as a stopper, I could have jammed my face on the long handlebars.

This finger also serves as a massage tool. It is very strong and could really put pressure on a body part that needs some kneading.

My family has been giving me advice as to what I should do about it. My cousin Lon Lon said that I should have it removed and reattach it to my palm so I could fish a booger without anybody noticing. An uncle told me that he could chop it off easily with a big ax, I just have to say the word. Lui, on the other hand, said I should write an article about it, which I already did. But I am also considering Lon Lon's advice (hmm). The chopping thing is definitely out of the question.

The moral lesson of this story is that we are created according to the image and likeness of God. And it still holds true. We cannot question Him as to why some have disabilities while others are normal. There are times when I think about having an operation. Then again, I've realized that my "extra" finger had brought me luck, or shall I say, blessings.

The author, 24, is currently working in a call center. Strangers, kids and adults alike, still stare at her extra finger.



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ARIELLE, Ann, Ronin and Marc Leviste

...to be a dad at 20

By Marc Leviste

I WAS a third year Marketing Management student and barely 20 years old when I first found out that I was going to be a parent. Actually, the night before my then girlfriend and I found out, we were already anxious. She conducted the pregnancy test first thing in the morning. *Hindi ako makatulog.* I kept on looking at my clock, checking on the time.

Ayun na nga... around 6 a.m., the expected call and the unexpected result came, and believe me, I felt as if I was the most blessed human being that day.

Ann and I shopped for her maternity wear, pregnancy books, visited the ob-gyne regularly. Most of all, we decided to commit ourselves (emotionally and legally) to one another. I even remember hugging her ob-gyne when I found out that my baby is a boy. The whole nine months was a "story" in itself, and on April 27, 1999, my wife gave birth to a healthy baby boy. Just when you thought my "story" ends here, for me it was just the beginning of another chapter.

I even remember the time when the nurses called my name amid the excitement and tension. My mom, mother-in-law and I rushed to the delivery room. As soon as I saw "mini-me," I gave him a kiss and thanked the Lord for everything. During the photo-op at the delivery room of the Makati Medical Center, my mom asked me to check his organ... so far, so big... I mean, good. She jokingly told me to count his fingers and toes, *baka kasi kulang... yun pala, sobra*. Roberto Antonio or Ronin had an extra finger and 12 toes. According to my Chinese in-laws, he's one lucky kid!

Nine months after, Ann was on the family way again, but this time it was a girl. On Oct. 21, 2000, she gave birth to Antoinette Rachelle, Arielle for short. This time, it was her chance to bond with our child. Ann would dress her up as if Arielle had a fashion show every day. But then again, she will always be daddy's girl. *Mas malambing ang babae.*

Now that I am 24 years old, working, with a family and father of two, life for all of us just keeps on getting better. Just last summer, Ronin (who's now three years old) and I went to the United States. It was his first time to visit a US mall, Universal Studios, watch up-to-date cartoons (24/7), experience Chuckee Cheeses and, of course, Disneyland. God, he loved every bit of it! For me, it was another unique experience worth sharing, since it was my first time to go to the US with a kid who had no mommy or nanny along... a big brother who misses his baby sister... a kid who was overwhelmed... a kid who doesn't really care about our foreign exchange rate... and, most of all, lots of unforgettable memories. It was father-and-son bonding!

Now, why did I insist on sharing this chapter of my "story"? Well, I want to tell every 2bU! reader that you cannot compromise precious moments and quality time. They come in boxes—chocolates, that is, and sometimes in bulks. Whether it's spending time with your loved ones or even winning the lotto, always remember to seize the moment!

I do not intend to end this chapter of my story, but maybe just a "paragraph." Looking back, I realized that there's a smile on my face as I composed this write-up. As a father, I just can't help but be proud of such wonderful experiences. Young as I am, I know that I have grown to be a more responsible and better person.

. . .to be raised in an Opus Dei family

By Cheryl Tiu
2bu! Correspondent

"WHY do we have to cover our eyes when everybody else is looking?" was a question my younger brothers and I had posed to our mom more than once in our adolescent years, every time there was a kissing scene in a movie. "Because watching indecent scenes triggers immoral thoughts," she would always reply. "And having immoral thoughts is a sin."

Okay. I come from an Opus Dei family.

Opus Dei, which means "the work of God," was founded by the recently canonized St. Josémaria Escriva. It is now one of the most powerful sects on the Catholic pedestal. My mother is a supernumerary, an Opus Dei allowed to marry and raise a family (as opposed to a numerary who is a celibate and resides in an Opus Dei center), while my father is a cooperator—he supports the Opus Dei 100 percent.

At a very young age, the Catholic doctrines had already been ingrained in us kids. The best thing about it was that I never had to labor in my Christian Living classes because I knew more than my teachers did. And beginning first grade, while my classmates followed the Sweet Valley series, I read "The Lives of Saints." Every time I'd make the honor roll, I would receive either the succeeding parts of the "Lives" series or religious figurines as my prize, to add to my wide collection (though this practice no longer applies to my kid siblings). I had no qualms about this—these saints were my icons.

But eventually, as I grew older, I also wanted to feel the Sweet Valley experience. My mom allowed me to, but she would always screen my books before purchasing them. If there were any make-out scenes or anything that was even remotely related to sex, she'd make me return them. Once, I was given a book called "Growing Up" and there was a section devoted to safe sex, encouraging the use of condoms. My mom was about to tear it out until I convinced her to just glue the pages together because I wanted my book intact.

My siblings grew up on a diet of "Sesame Street," "Bioman" and "Ghostwriter"—and religious cartoons. Cartoon versions of the apparition of Our Lady of Fatima and the life of St. Francis were on constant replay in our VHS player. So unlike my friends, I had no idea who Pee Wee Herman was, but I knew all about St. Bernadette.

No 'Dawson's Creek'

During high school, I was discouraged to watch "Dawson's Creek." But since it was my favorite show, I bargained with my mom and she agreed—on the condition that she would watch it with me. Every single time there was a kissing scene or even when the talk of sex came up, I would groan because I had to switch the channel. I knew my mom had the best intentions for me, but I eventually got ticked off when the next day, my friends would excitedly relive the hottest moments of the episode and I couldn't take part in the conversation. I just couldn't tell them that I wasn't allowed to watch.

The strictures of the Opus Dei may be a bit extreme but they have formed me into the refined, disciplined person that I am now

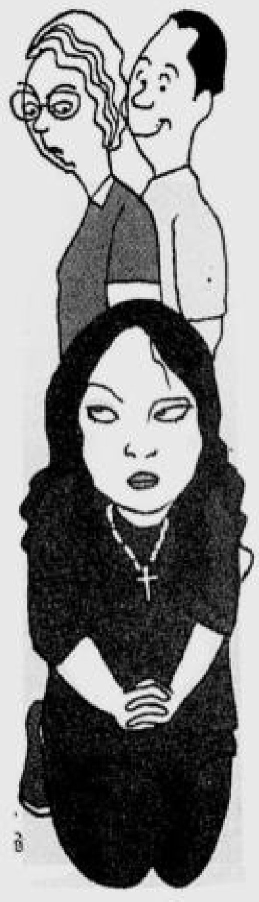


ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

My mom is strict about the dress code in the Church. She wouldn't allow me wearing sleeveless blouses to Church, even if the straps are four fingers thick. She believes in dressing appropriately in the House of God. She also always inspects me before I leave the house, so that means I cannot wear low-cut, backless, see-through and super-tight tops.

It wasn't until recently that my parents allowed me to go out with guys alone. My parents would also heavily question me when they would see me sitting close with any boy. They would give me a verbal lashing if a guy—any guy—had his arm around me! I've long given up in trying to explain to them.

We started attending Sunday Mass even before we were due for our First Holy Communion. We started practicing abstinence during Lent even while we were only in grade school! Our biggest "obligation" would be to go to confession. "You always have to be prepared," my mother would remind us. Every night, we would pray the rosary together, as a family.

We were encouraged to help out at the White Cross orphanage or any centers for the less fortunate during our summer and Christmas breaks. And, unlike the majority, Holy Week for us has always been a time of sacrifice; we try not to go out of town, as it is the time to contemplate the Passion and Death of Christ. We practiced austerity—buying only things necessary. The result? We don't go around wanting a lot of things, and every time our parents would ask us what we wanted for our birthdays, Christmas or *pasalubong*, we would all chorus, "Nothing!"

Devout parents

My parents go to Mass every day. My mom goes to the Opus Dei Center and attends seminars and retreats regularly. They never force any of us to follow in their footsteps—only if we wanted to. The Opus Dei may seem to be a bit on the extreme, but it only has the intention of making good people out of us.

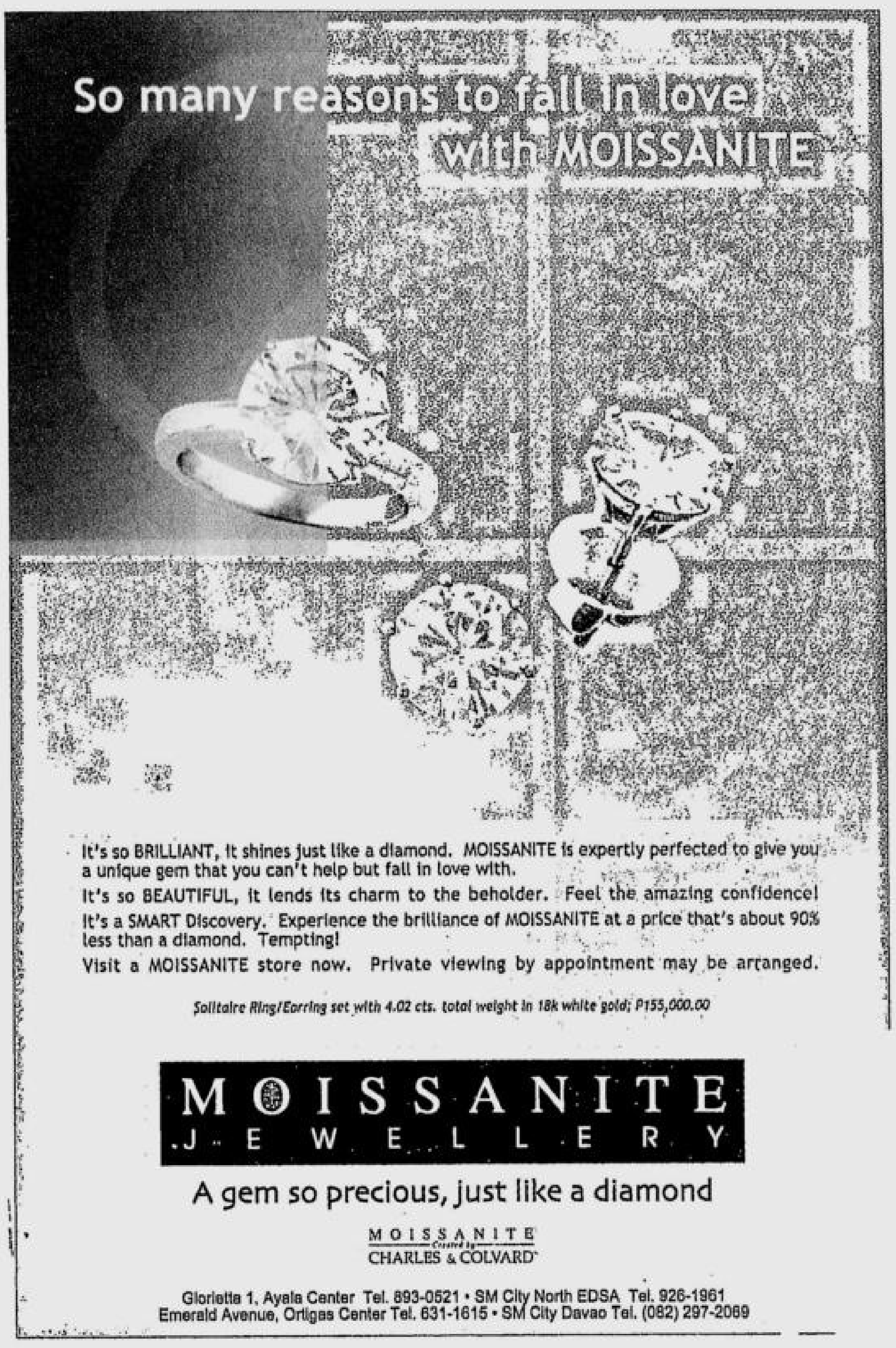
My mom may have been very strict with us, but she has never, ever forced me to stop my love for rock music and my all-black, grungy-gothic way of dressing (she was even with me when I bought my Marilyn Manson shirt). Nor has she ever stopped me from going out drinking and clubbing with my friends.

It may come as a shock to those who know me that I am actually very religious—all because I have been raised in an Opus Dei household. I don't talk about God or read the Bible much, but I visit the chapel every day (since time no longer permits me to go to Mass daily unlike in high school) and pray all the time. And when my soul gets scarred, I always go back to the belief that God has a plan and that one day, I will finally understand.

Though our one-hour-only-of-TV-a-day and our no-cursing, no-saying-"stupid"-at-home rules constantly exasperate me, I have realized that my parents' strictures have formed me into the more disciplined, refined person I am now. I used to roll my eyes and scoff at some of these seemingly preposterous rules. But at the end of the day, I know my mom is a living saint who has only the best of intentions of making us earn our salvation.

Cher is the eldest of five siblings and is currently a sophomore taking up Communication Technology at the Ateneo de Manila University.

E-mail the author at chloe_dominique @yahoo.com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. . .to be a college dropout

By Francesca Villareal
2bU! Correspondent

IF SOMEONE told me back in high school that I'd end up an out-of-school youth in college, I would have laughed my head off. After all, I knew myself pretty well. I always managed to end up in the top 10 of our batch even if I barely read the required books.

I had what you may call "a reputation" going for me, being the daughter of a lawyer and a university professor. Not that it was all that kept me alive throughout high school, but it helped me gain the respect and trust of my teachers and fellow classmates.

I was president of a couple of organizations, aside from being a class officer. I also got to represent the school in various seminars and workshops outside school. That's why I didn't give that much time for studying because I knew my extra-curricular activities would save me from getting those poor grades. It was all because of my reputation. So if anyone did say I was going to end up nowhere in college, I would've referred that person to an asylum.

So no one saw it coming, not even my most prophetic of classmates, those whom we willingly offered our palm to because they could see who we were going to marry. Not my boyfriend, whom I have to write concept papers for once in a while. Not my parents, whom I suspect would've rather gotten the news that I was secretly married with calm than the news that I couldn't hack it in college. And certainly not by me—I, who knew college was just another phase I'd breeze through like high school.

I'm a college dropout and I'm not proud of it.

No map

You now how some people have their future mapped out, down to the last detail? I never did that. I never even had an idea of what my future was going to be like. So when it was time for me to fill out my college application, I couldn't have cared less about what my parents wrote for me for my degree program. I threw caution to the wind as I felt I had no particular passion and thought I'd just go with the flow.

Business economics didn't sound tough for me since I received good grades in economics back in high school. That, until I realized in my first term that there was more to the subject than computing taxes and memorizing terms. It was also then that I got to see a university play, and the experience got my creative juices flowing. I realized that I wanted to be in the arts after all.

She's enjoying the longest summer vacation of her life with much regret

I made friends with the people in fine arts, while not bothering to know more about my classmates. I got sick of anything that had to do with my course. I started to cut my classes, drop my subjects left and right, and not submit my requirements. Suddenly, I found myself having a different reputation, although that didn't stop me from slacking off school. Deep inside, my ego was still the size of Texas, and I didn't care much about the image I began to project in college. I was going downhill, until one of my professors ranked us in her subjects.

I was third—to the last.

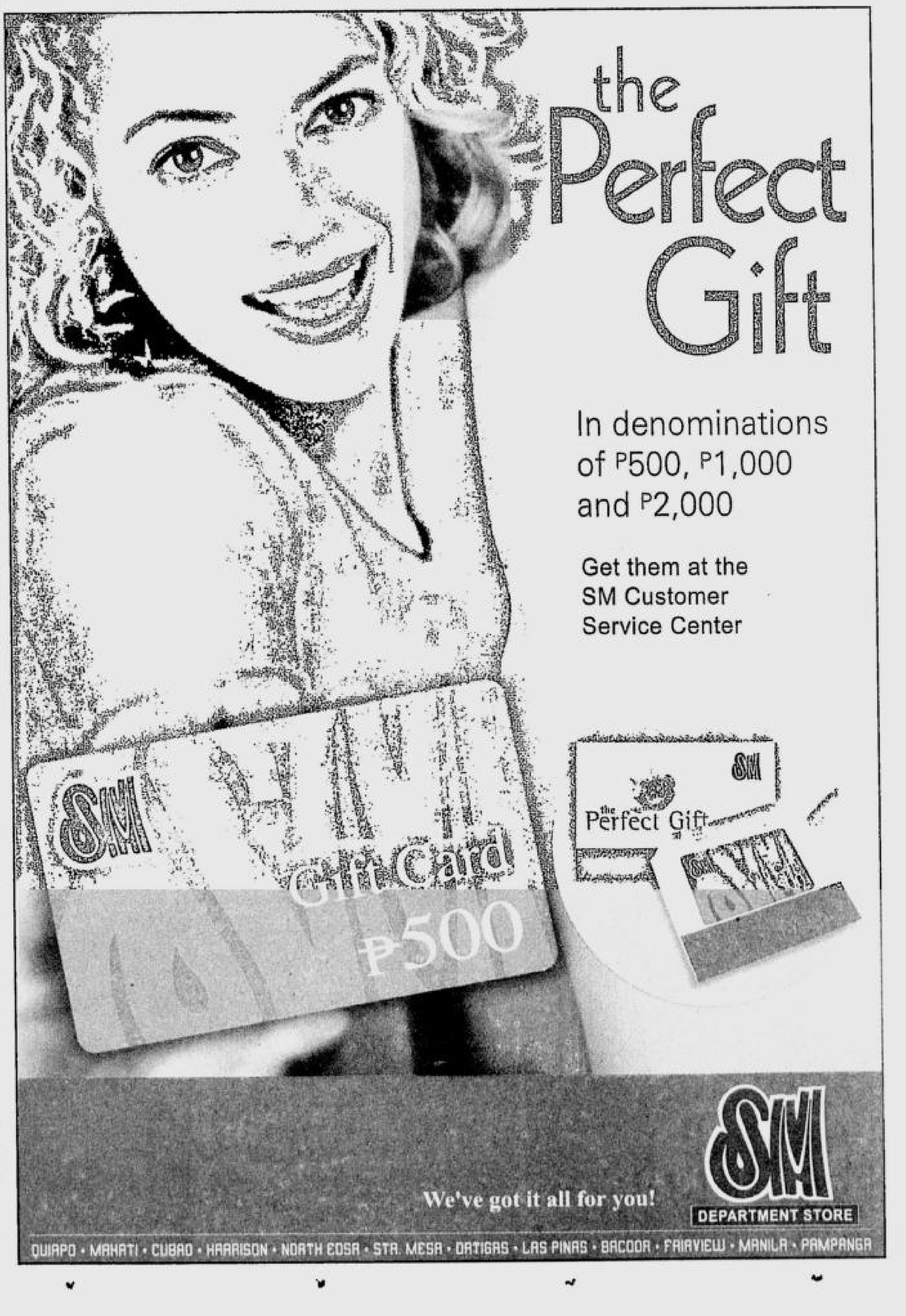
Disgusted

Disgusted with myself, I cried and told everything to my parents, who had thought I was getting by easily. I asked them permission to drop out of college, and they took that hard. After all, they had prided themselves in how we were all achievers in the family. But I explained to them that my heart was elsewhere, and although they didn't agree to the course I was after (a degree in fine arts), they allowed me to choose Arts and Sciences or Mass Communications.

As I wait for the next school year, while I process my papers, I've been spending my longest summer vacation ever. I'm updated about the latest in popular culture—movies, music and television. I get to go out of town and visit my cousins in the provinces. I've put up my own webpage, made friends online and earned a little as a graphics designer. I'm practically having the time of my life, spending my time as I want it.

But at the same time, I can't help but think of how, five years down the road, I'd be slaving away in school while my friends are sipping coffee in Starbucks in their high-powered suits. But never mind that. At least I have more time to prepare before I join the rat race of the corporate world.

Cesca, 20, fears looking too old for her freshman class.



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. . .to fight an attacker

By Leidy Zara Myeth Loreto
2bU! Correspondent

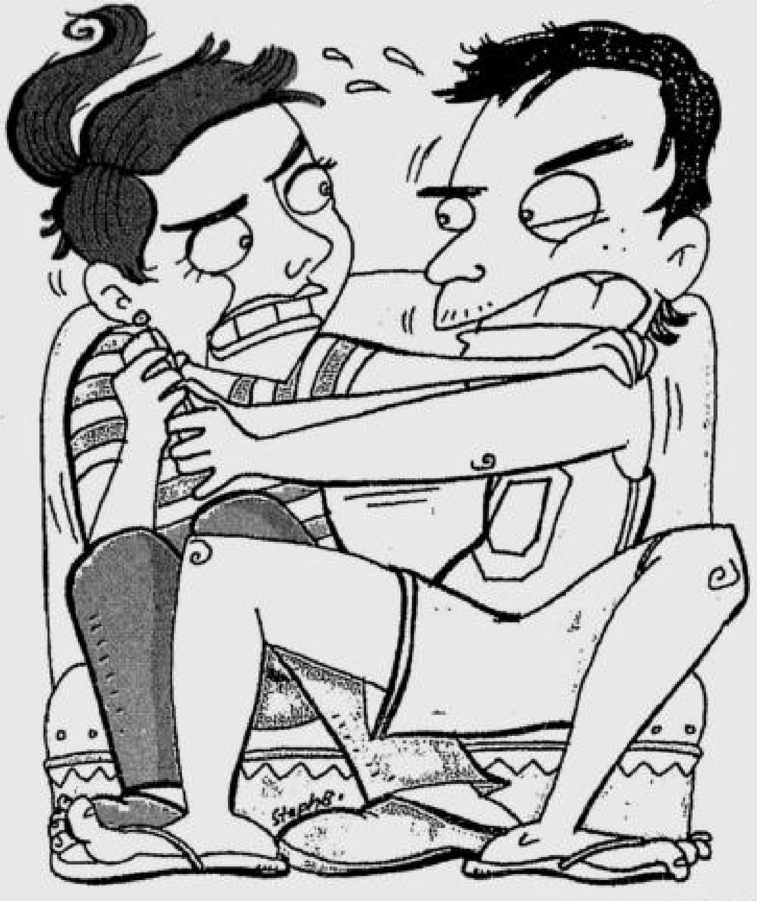

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

FEB. 28, 2002 was just an ordinary day. It was 10 p.m. and I was on my way home from school. My dad wasn't able to fetch me that night because he had to escort my mom to work. My friend, Patricia, had left earlier. I had no choice but to travel alone. I wasn't scared. My mind was preoccupied with the oral report I had to present in class the next day.

From Laong Laan I took a jeep going to Blumentritt. It was full so I felt safe. I sat two seats away from the entrance of the jeep. I texted my mom to inform her that I was already on my way home then I put my cell phone back into the pocket of my skirt. As the jeep approached the end of Dimasalang bridge, the man sitting beside me suddenly pulled out a knife and asked for my cell phone. He aimed the knife at my left abdomen, I was so surprised that I grabbed the blade of the knife and tried to fight him off. All the while, his other hand was creeping to the pocket of my skirt to get my cell phone. I tried to stop him using my right hand and we started struggling. I then shouted to the other passengers, "*Ano ba, hindi niyo ba ko tutulungan?*" To my amazement, they just looked at us as if we were putting on a show for them to watch.

Luckily a police car was passing by the other side of the road and heard the commotion. The jeep stopped and the driver went out and called the police. The thief was already holding my phone when he noticed that the policemen were already coming. He tried to escape, leaving the phone behind. The policemen were able to catch the thief and put him in handcuffs. It was only then that one of the passengers suddenly shouted, "*Magnanakaw! Magnanakaw! Magnanakaw!*" It was way too late.

The policemen then asked me to come with them to the police station to file a report. At first I was scared to go because it meant riding in the same car with the thief. It was only when the police promised that I would be safe that I agreed to go. Besides, the other passengers were already pushing me outside the jeep telling me to go with the police.

While inside the car, I called my mom to inform them of what happened and where I was going. She said they would follow. Then I texted my friends.

At the police station, I was asked to sit down for five to 10 minutes. One of the policemen told me that they have to bring me to a hospital to have my wounds treated and get a medical certificate.

When we went back to the police station, the investigator who was supposed to get my statement hadn't arrived yet, so I had to wait again. A few minutes later my parents arrived with my aunt and uncle.

A policeman at the front desk called me and asked for personal information. He also asked the time and location of the crime. The thief was also asked to give his name, (which I couldn't and don't want to remember), address and age—he was only 19!

A thin, frail-looking woman carrying a baby then approached and introduced herself as the wife of the thief. She started asking for mercy, saying that they were poor and that his husband was only forced to do it because their child was sick.

It was already 1 a.m. and the investigator was still nowhere to be found.

At 2 a.m., I was already tired and my dad was very frustrated because the investigator still hadn't arrived yet. My dad decided that we should go home.

I did put a man to jail, albeit temporarily—for about 36 hours. I don't know where I got my strength to fight off that thief, but at that moment I was so scared that the thief might kill me so I tried to fight him.

I believe it's just a matter of knowing your limitations.

Leidy, a Journalism Senior at UST's College of Arts and Letters, is a control freak.

. . .to ride a from hell

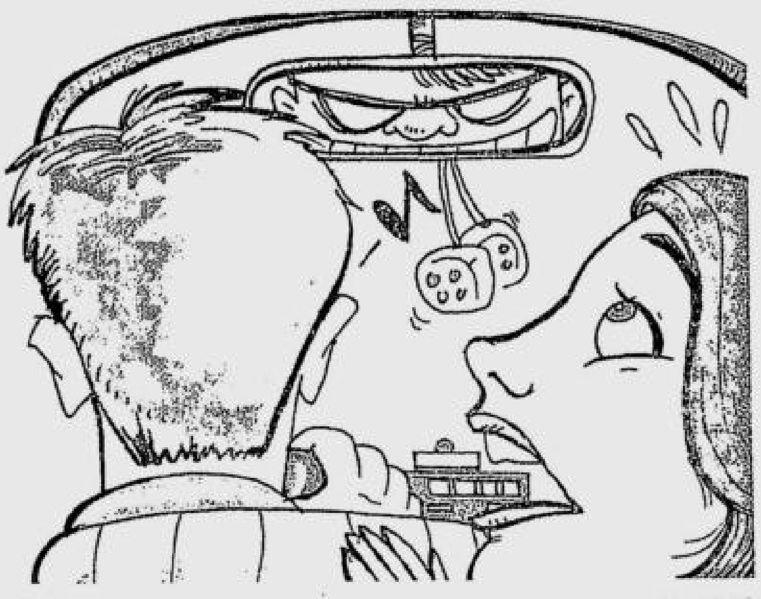

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

By Katrina Rhea Blanco
As told to: Saleema Devi Refran

I DON'T ride a cab alone anymore. I have learned my lesson that I would never want to go through it again.

It was a couple of days before Mother's Day last year. I went to SM North Edsa to buy a cake for my Mom who was leaving for the States before Mother's Day. Everything turned out okay. I had my Mom's favorite Black Forest cake in one hand and my black purse in the other.

I waited patiently for a cab in one of the terminals. It was already 4 p.m. and the mall was already crowded. The line was long and there were a few delays with passengers putting their stuff inside the trunk. Finally, I got into a red Corolla taxi.

"*Manong, sa* Panay Avenue *lang po,*" I said as I entered the cab. The cab driver said nothing. I seated behind the driver and put the cake beside me. I felt nothing unusual as I thought about my mother's delight once she sees the cake I bought for her. Then I remembered that West Avenue would be in heavy traffic at that time. So I told the driver to go through Edsa instead.

Along EDSA, a car filled with college boys came near the cab. They were waving, trying to get my attention but I didn't look at them. The driver noticed it, too. "Miss, *tinitignan ka o,*" he said. I just said, "*Hayaan ninyo, Manong. Wala lang magawa yang mga yan.*" Then I noticed the cab driver looking at me through the mirror. He was staring with a silly and unfriendly grin on his face. That was when I became suspicious of him.

The driver, who's in his late 30s, didn't look like most taxi drivers. Instead of the usual crisp white polo shirt, he wore a black sleeveless shirt. He was a bit small and muscular. He looked scary but I disregarded the thought since he was making a living through modest means.

I was feeling uncomfortable with his looks so I decided to divert his attention by striking a conversation. "*Manong, sa inyo po ba tong taxi?*" I asked. "*Oo, akin,*" he said. I wanted to believe him but I knew he was lying. Fear was slowly creeping in but I knew I had to look brave.

I suddenly felt really scared when we were in front of Merced Bakeshop near the intersection of EDSA and Quezon Avenue. I noticed that the driver was rummaging through his stuff in a compartment. I almost jumped out of the taxi when I saw him take out a knife and clean it by rubbing it against his jeans. I moved to the other side of the seat and changed my destination. "*Manong, sa may* Mcdo *na lang diyan bago mag-*MRT station." I said calmly.

"*Kala ko ba* Panay Avenue *ka?*" he asked. "*Hindi, Manong. Dito po talaga ako,*" I said as I prepared to get off the cab. At the moment the cab stopped in front of the establishment, I took my cake, threw the money to the front seat and did not even wait for my change. Before I closed the door, I heard him say, "*Parang gusto ko ring mag-*Mcdo." I immediately ran inside the establishment. Once inside, I saw him parking the cab.

I went to the washroom since it was a good place to hide but there was a line. I couldn't wait anymore. I panicked and called my Dad. Shaking and crying, I told him about my ordeal. "A cab driver is after me and he has a knife! Help me, Dad."

Thankfully, a crewmember heard what I said and saw that I was shaking with fear. She rushed to get the store manager and informed her of what was happening. The manager called the security guard and alerted him on the situation. The crewmember then handed me a glass of soda to help me calm down and sat with me at one of the tables at the back of the establishment. The manager assured me that as long as I was within her care nothing bad would ever happen to me.

As I gulped down my drink, the crewmember asked me if I could identify the man. I looked around and saw that the driver was eating a burger about four tables away from us. He was looking around. I looked away and told the crewmember where he was. To our surprise, he was already at the table behind us.

I again felt fear run down my spine. I didn't know what to do and the crewmember also got scared. Like an answered prayer, my cell phone rang. It was my Dad. He was already there. I nearly cried as I saw my Dad come to me with a wrench in his hand. I was safe. My Dad's here, I said to myself.

The crewmember and a security guard escorted us out. Right outside the door, I was able to give a sigh of relief. I thanked the crewmember and security guard. If not for them, who knows what could have happened to me.

A year and six months later, I still remember vividly the cab driver's face. I still remember how scared I was when I saw him cleaning his knife inside the cab. Thank God I escaped that nightmare. I could have ended as a tabloid headline the next day. But thanks to the people who helped me I was able to share my story.

Riding a cab still gives me goose bumps. I pray that no one would fall victim to that taxi driver.

Kat, 18, is a student at the St. Luke's College of Nursing. She keeps a can of pepper spray in her bag for protection.

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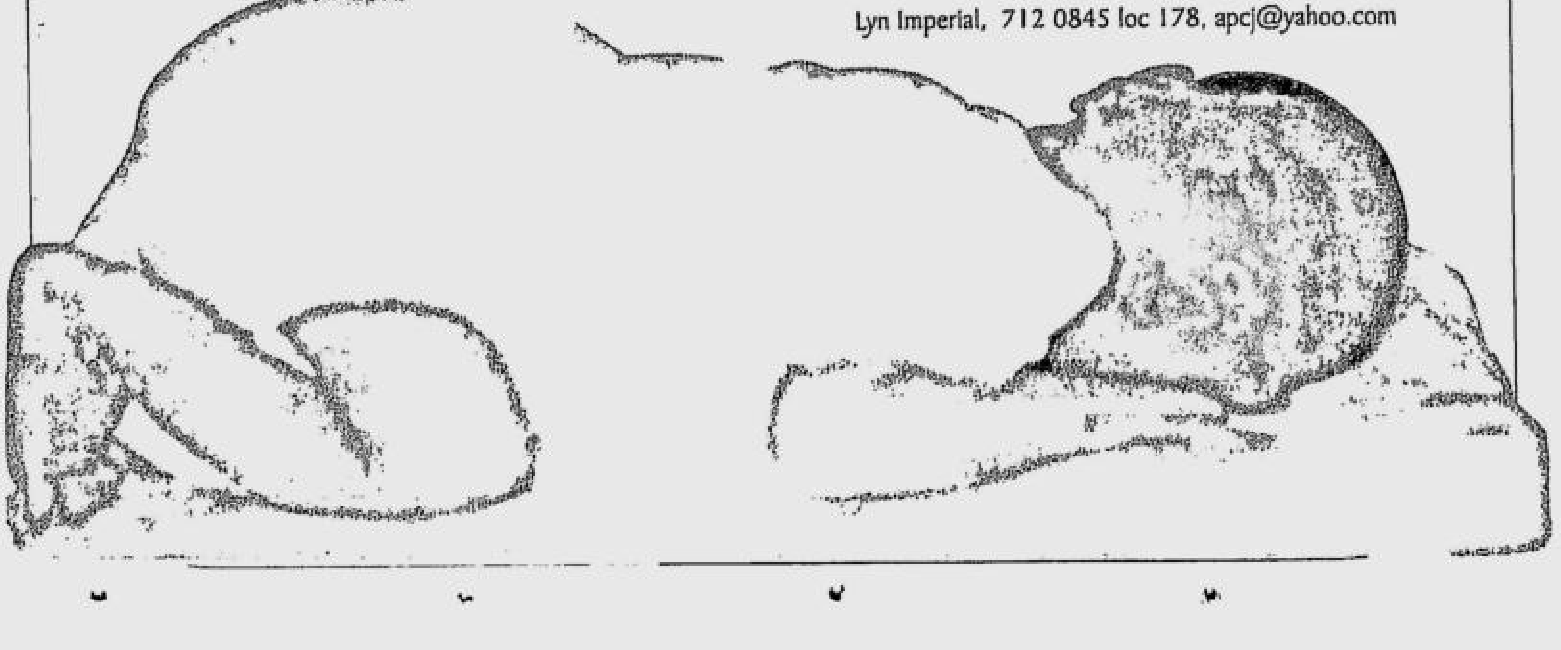

to leave the seminary

By Cedric A. Solidon
2bU! Correspondent

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seminary

I HAD spent almost a third of my life in the seminary, four years in high school and two years in college, before I finally decided to go out.

Many people ask me why I entered the seminary. Some are even incredulous that I was once a seminarian. It started from my unknowing decision as a grade six schoolboy who wanted so much to study that I agreed with my parents that I would enter the seminary in our province. I didn't have an idea how this decision would forever alter my life. So I entered the seminary without an idea where I was going.

My years in the minor seminary were spent in praying, playing basketball, studying and lots of music. We prayed in the morning, in the afternoon, in the evening and before going to bed. That is not to include of course, praying the rosary, the Novena to Our Lady of Perpetual Help, the *Via Crucis* or the Way of the Cross, and praying before and after meals.

We took the usual subjects of Catholic schools. We took up Latin, which gave most of us headache in the seminary. But a little knowledge of the language was a privilege. A seminarian may impress girls from other schools by writing a letter with some Latin words or phrases in it. One will usually see the word "*Pax*" for "peace" for "I l letter w

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. . . to lose a friend to suicide

By Saleema Devi Refran
2bUI Correspondent

MARCH 3, 2001 started unlike any other Saturday in my life. It was a week before college finals week in Miriam College. Our class section was in a complete mess. We had to fulfill several requirements. We were tired. I arrived home at around 6 p.m. Our phone was ringing. I picked it up and it was my friend Maureen. She was crying.

I couldn't understand her. She was just sobbing. She just said, *"Si Sheila nabaril."* I told her to stop joking.

But I was wrong. It was true. Marissa didn't know exactly what had happened. All she told me was that Sheila was shot and was admitted to the Philippine Heart Center.

I immediately called Heart Center. As the phone rang, chills ran down my spine. My heart was pounding. I almost felt like I couldn't breathe. Then the operator finally answered. I told her that my friend was admitted there and I wanted to confirm it. She transferred my call to the emergency room. The ringing of the phone seemed endless. I tried to hold back my tears but I couldn't. Fear had already overcome me. But then a voice answered, "ER." I stopped my sobbing and told her my problem. She asked for Sheila's full name and her age. She told me to wait because she was going to call the nurse in charge. It seemed like forever before the nurse came.

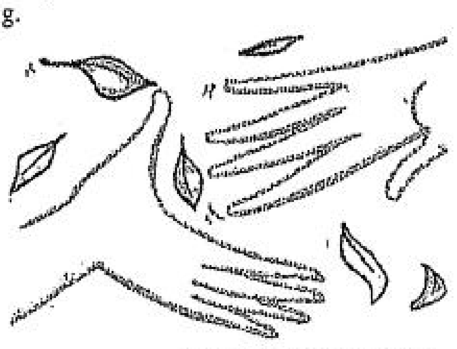

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

"Kaano-ano mo siya?" The nurse asked.

"Kaibigan ko po siya." I said as I tried to hold back my tears.

She paused. It was then that I knew.

"Yes, she was admitted earlier due to a gunshot wound, but she expired at around 6 p.m."

"Ano ho?" I managed to say as tears flooded down my cheeks.

"We tried out best...."

I didn't hear what she said after that. I didn't mean to be impolite, but I just put the receiver down. It was too hard for me. It was too unbelievable to be true. She couldn't be dead. She just couldn't.

My first friend

Sheila was my very first college friend. Losing her like that was hard, very hard. After an investigation, the police ruled it was a suicide. We couldn't believe it. She couldn't have pumped that bullet into her head as what the police said. She couldn't have just taken her own life like that. I remember myself reasoning. But she did, my rational self said. Hard as it might seem, it was the truth.

Nobody knew why she did it. We all had no clue. Her life was perfect. She had really nice parents and a wonderful brother. They were well off. She was very pretty and smart. She was even part of our school's swimming team. She brought home a couple of medals, too. She had everything. She also had us.

> The police ruled it a suicide. We couldn't believe it. But my rational self said it was possible

Nobody could understand why it had to happen. Everything about her was perfect. She was always happy, save for some bad-trip days. But days before she died, she was on a hugging and kissing spree. She would actually hug and kiss every friend in sight. The day before she died, I remember that she shouted my name and kissed and hugged me like crazy. She was naturally sweet so I didn't think of it as different. In hindsight, it was her final goodbye kiss and hug to me.

Though her life ended on a bitter note, I will remember her naughty self. Her skirt would always get disarranged because of her tomfoolery. In the morning, she would march into class with her trademark *tikwas* hair. She would laugh at silly jokes as if they were the very first jokes she had ever heard.

The best thing about her was her generosity to and love of others. Who would forget those little gift-wrapped chocolate bars she would give everyone in school during Christmas? Or how she would always treat friends to snacks? She was really more than an angel, probably a saint.

But the best that I would always remember about her was her love for my cooking. During the whole Yuletide season that year, she drove me crazy by buying boxes and boxes of my brownies and even asking for more. She was my greatest customer, also my most critical taste tester. She was really a great friend and that alone makes her one special person.

It is really sad to see a wonderful girl like Sheila go so early. She could've done a lot more good in this world.

As the cool Christmas breeze blows just around the corner, it will be the second Christmas without Sheila. It has never been the same since she left. Somehow the wind is a little bit colder, and the Christmas cheer a little less merry. Nobody would be handing out gift-wrapped Twix's or Cadbury bars. Nobody would be buying my brownies since I have lost the drive baking them. Somehow the taste just isn't the same as before. Something, someone is missing.

Sam is a Journalism freshman at UP Diliman and a certified UP Fighting Maroons Fan.

Email the author at s_a_l_é_e_m_a@ yahoo.com

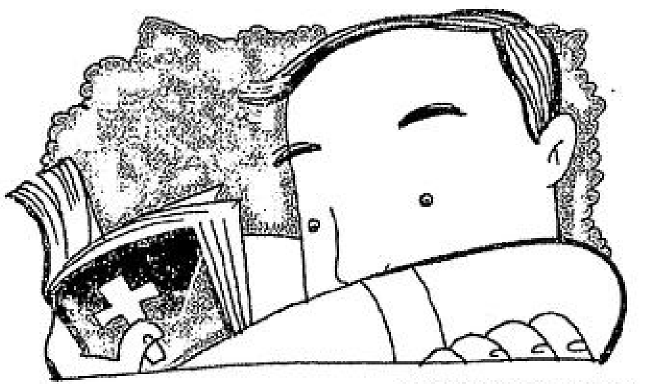

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

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er guitarists in the semi-nary, I became a regular guitarist during Mass when I was a high school senior. Instead of playing Oasis' or Radiohead's songs, I played songs like *"Tanging Yaman"* and "Sing a New Song." My first guitar gods were the upperclassmen who played the guitar very well.

Life in the college seminary was basically the same, but the way we were disciplined wasn't as strict as it used to be in the minor seminary. We were left to ourselves to decide or discover whether or not we were doing the right thing. In high school, we were made to kneel down or squat for each big offense that we made. The different style of formation in college helped us to make more mature decisions and be more responsible for our actions. It was with this kind of formation that I found out that I was not called to be a priest, but for some other vocation. It was a tough decision to make that it took me two years in the college seminary to be finally be able to decide whether to stay or go out of the seminary. When I finally made that decision, I knew immediately that I made the right choice.

Seminary life showed me who I am and who I can be. It helped me a lot to know God and Jesus better. And being the only son in the family, it was in the seminary where I found the gift of brotherhood.

Good formation

I owe my formators, co-seminarians, friends and seminary personnel a lot for helping me become who I am today. It may sound trite but this still rings true for me. They helped me find the special things that I had inside when I didn't even know or believe that they existed though the formation and friendship they gave me. They encouraged me when I didn't believe in myself. They, especially the formators, showed me that I could be better than who I am right now by not condoning my mediocrity.

I didn't use to pray much when I was in elementary. God and Jesus were such vague ideas to me. But through the spiritual formation that we had in the seminary, I somehow came to know them better. Up to this time, though, I'm still asking questions and looking for answers to know better who this God is and who Jesus is in my life. Maybe I won't be able to find the answers in this lifetime, but I'm thankful still that seminary life made me grow spiritually.

Being the only son made me wonder how would life be if I had a brother. I found the answer in the seminary. Although brothers, like me, can be pretty irritating, I found out that a brother is more than just a great drinking mate and ally when other guys are out to beat you up, but can also be a great and trustworthy friend.

It had been a great six years for me in the seminary. I wanted to be a priest, but then I woke up and smelled the coffee (sounds familiar, hey?). I realized that the priesthood isn't the way of life God has called me to. He has other plans for me. It was the bitter truth, but I have come to accept it. Whatever is His plan for me is something I'm still trying to discover.

Cedric is a Journalism major from UP Diliman and plays the guitar for a band called Ickabrood.

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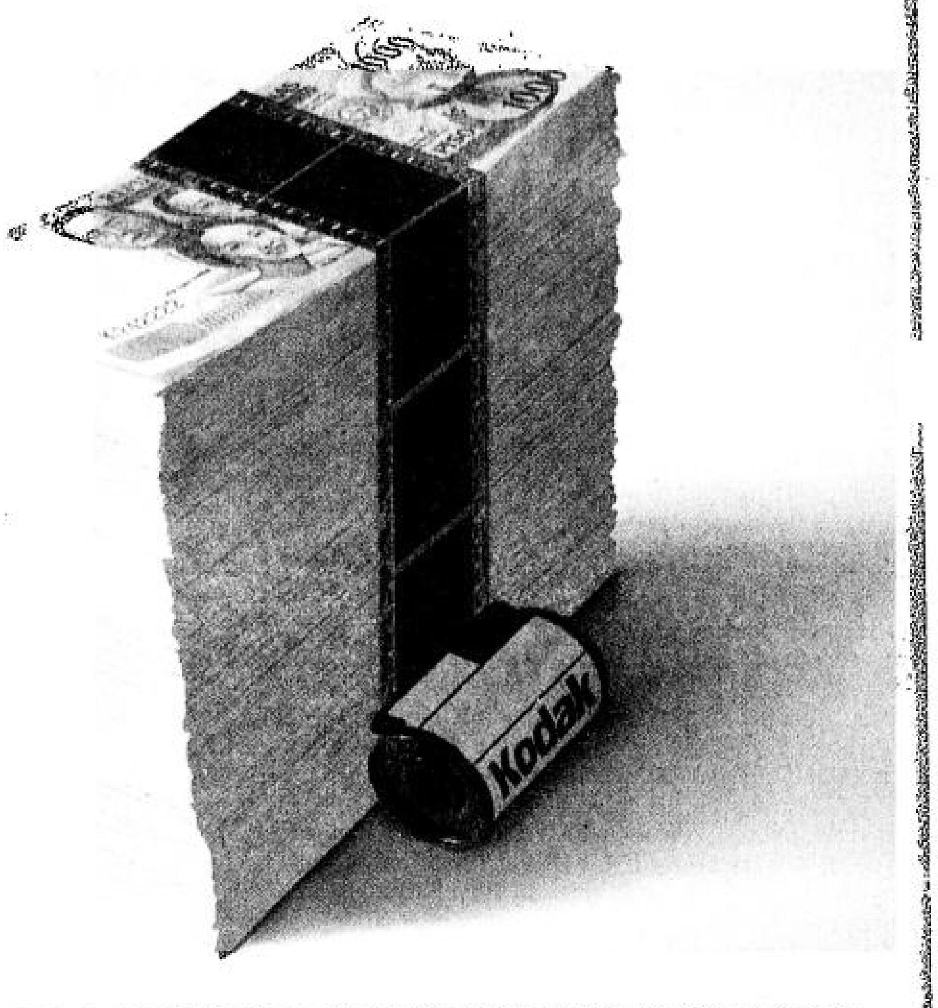

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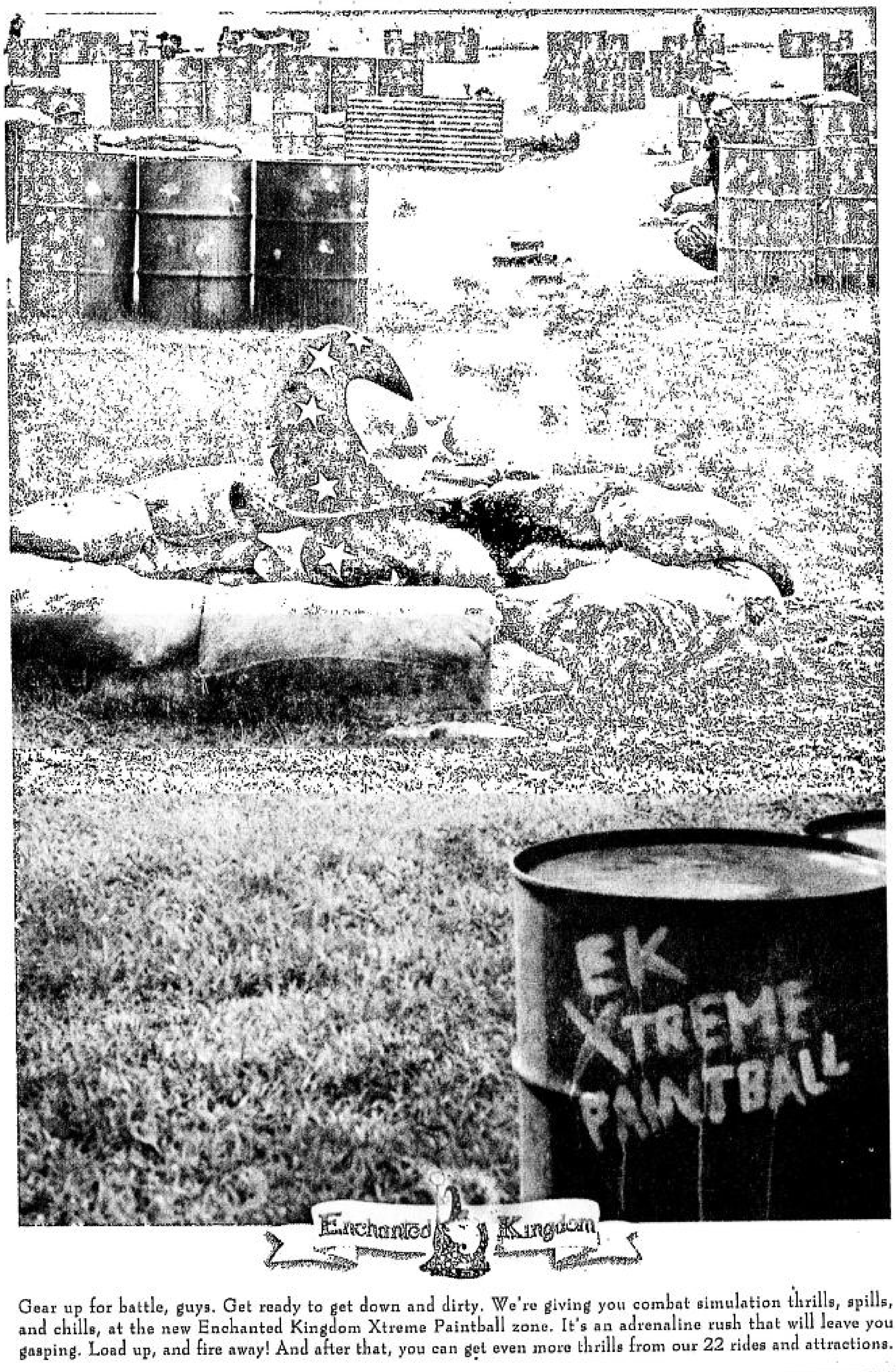

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ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

By Nic Ruffy
2bU! Contributor

I'M SITTING in a small café in Downers Grove, Illinois at 9:40 on a Sunday morning, sleep-deprived and running on coffee. It has been a long night, and I just dropped a friend off at the airport, kissed her goodbye and wondered when I will see her again, if ever. Might seem normal, but I just met her last night, and everything seems to be running in fast-forward. The funny thing is, for me, that's normal.

The bigger question is how I got from my cozy Manila suburb to Suburban Hell, USA. But I'm exaggerating. It really isn't that bad.

It's been a long ride getting here, and I'm still not sure where *here* is. I've taken a ridiculous number of flights during the past two or so years, and considering I have never even been out of the Philippines before that, I am awed. Sometimes it doesn't seem real at all. Just like now. I'm sitting here eating my chocolate chip pancakes and watching people go about their regular Sunday morning routine, and I feel like a voyeur. I'm intruding, and I am after all, just passing by.

Passing by. Seems like I've been doing a whole lot of that.

I had finished university a few years ago and was on my way to whatever it is university kids normally do after they finish school. I had done a summer internship for a good company, and an offer was in the works. Most of my friends had landed respectable jobs, and I guess I just had to do the same. I could almost see my entire life planned out. Raises, company car, kids and a house in the suburbs.

Somewhere along the way, I got lost and started thinking that there should be more to life than this. I wanted to do something else. I could go on and say that I was on a quest for life's true meaning, or that I had a deeper motivation, but the sad truth is, I was just bored.

International training

A friend told me about the possibility of an international traineeship with a student organization called AIESEC, and I jumped at the chance. I had known the organization throughout university, but I guess I was just too busy hanging out and getting drunk, and doing whatever it is university kids do best. I had my priorities straight. I signed up, got all my forms in, and by some twist of fate, I got matched to a company less than two months later. The decision to move wasn't really hard, but it was probably because I didn't think about it too hard. I just knew I had to get out, and this chance was as good as any. A few days later, I found myself sitting on a plane to Hong Kong.

I had lived away from home while in university, but not really in the true sense. I was home for weekends, and I had pre-cooked food waiting to be microwaved anytime I wanted. I was never spoiled, but I was not exactly the epitome of independence. This time, I was moving to another country and leaving everything that I had known and was comfortable with. I didn't know why, but at the time, I had no reservations whatsoever. I needed to get out, and to me, it wasn't scary at all. It was exhilarating.

> Working with the worldwide student organization AIESEC has afforded the author the chance to travel the world, see places, and get confused about which city he could best sink his roots in

AIESEC was there to take care of the basics, but I was pretty much on my own, and loving every minute of it. Everything was new. Food, culture, people, everyday, you saw something different. People have this impression of Hong Kong as a giant slab of concrete, with high-rise after endless high-rise, and neon lights flooding the streets. It is all that, and so much more. I was ignorant and stayed two weeks in Boracay before making the move, because I thought I'd be deprived of a beach for a long time. My first weekend in Hong Kong, I was at a rave party in some small island, and yes, it was on a beach. The first couple of months went by so quickly, and up to now, I still don't know how it was possible to do so much and to meet so many people as I did on that first stretch. The novelty of it all probably had a lot to do with it.

Proper job

Two and a half years later, the traineeship has evolved into a proper job, and part of the job involves staying in the US for a while, bags in tow, and once again, leaving my flat, my friends, and all that is familiar in Hong Kong. I've moved around so much, sometimes I don't even bother unpacking everything.

People ask me if it gets tiring, and it does. The hardest part I guess is keeping personal relationships. Keeping them with friends living in the same city is hard enough, what more with people who move around so much. In this manner, I guess no other city grooms you better than Hong Kong. It's a perpetually moving place, and people rarely stay put. Everybody's from everywhere, and everybody's just passing by. I've gone through several circles of friends, and it's always a pain when somebody you've grown close to leaves. But in a way, it's a double-edged sword. With so little time to spend with people, you tend to filter out the people who feel superficial, and prefer to spend what little time you have with people you can make a connection with. Stronger friendships are formed, and these are the kind that withstands the tests of time and distance. At the very least, having friends spread out all over ensures you free couch space worldwide.

The thing with travel is it's like a drug. Once you start, it's hard to kick the habit. You keep on wanting more, counting the days until the next trip, the next move. In this way, I guess it breeds a special kind of person with a tolerance for it. A week ago, I was sitting at a bar in Paris with a Swedish friend, and we were discussing why we felt this way, and none of our friends from back home could understand. Travel stories are nice, but they can get boring to some people after a while.

Travel stories

I dish them out nonchalantly, travel stories, I mean, and sometimes, I feel like I'm taking it for granted. I do know that I'm lucky, and not everybody is given this opportunity. The opportunity to do what exactly, I'm still not sure. I know people who are dead-set on making it to the top, on building their own little kingdoms, and staying put. In this way, travel takes a special resolve to see the world, and to realize that there is so much more to life outside of the little bubble that we created around ourselves.

Filipinos, like most Asians I guess, see travel as something that has to be done on the high-end. The world of packaged tours and plush hotel rooms. Not that there's something wrong with that, but I guess in this way, a lot of young people miss out. If you do it with the proper frame of mind, it's mind-altering in the most dramatic sense, and the best part is, everything's real. I've had more fun staying in the cheapest hostels in China or Thailand than in swanky company-sponsored chateaus in Europe or hotel rooms in Las Vegas. I've had better conversations with people I only met while hiking up a volcano in Bali than with some people I've known my entire life. Cliché-ish as it sounds, there is a whole world out there, and the thought of it just blows me away.

I guess in a way, that's what keeps me going. I have my fears, as much as the next person, and probably on top of the list is the fear of not knowing when and where to stay. Sometimes I think home is Manila, or even Hong Kong, but more often than not, I'm not really sure. I can think of at least five different cities I'd want to live in for the next five years, but if you ask me where I want to live for good, I'd be hard-pressed for an answer. But I figure it'll come in time.

For now, I'll just keep on moving.

AIESEC is the world's largest student-run organization. Check out http://www.ph.aiesec.org or the AIESEC local committee in your university.

Nic is still scratching his head and trying to figure out what he wants to do with his life. In the meantime, he lives to see the world, and can be reached at http://www.ruffy.org

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. . .to get lost in a foreign country

By Marie Cris P. Raagas
2bU! Contributor

I DON'T remember getting lost when I was younger—not in the big department stores, not in Luneta Park, not in church, not even in a new place. Somehow, I seem to have managed to find my parents or my yaya whenever I lose sight of them... or, I guess, they seem to have always managed to find me first before I start panicking.

So when I went to Germany, I found myself lost without anybody to travel with, unlike in my younger years when a relative, a yaya, or a friend would always be around. And I'm not just talking about the feeling of being lost. I literally found myself lost in the middle of nowhere, in a foreign country where my proficiency in the English language had no bearing at all as to how I could find my way out of the situation. I found myself lost in a very different environment with no one to find me. Of course, by then, I knew better than to start panicking. Getting lost in Germany was an adventure for me. Like any other adventure, there was that rush of fear and excitement.

So how does one get lost in a foreign country like Germany? Easy. Just take a 16-hour flight from Manila to Germany, take the Deutsche Bahn (German Railways) train from Frankfurt to Stuttgart, change trains along the way and sit with strangers who can't speak English or Filipino (of course, it is their country and Deutsche is their language).

It's just like in The Amazing Race except that I didn't have a buddy or partner to get lost with. Even the best of detailed maps and narrative instructions on a piece of paper from my sister, who happened to be my host, didn't make it foolproof enough for me not to get lost. And we thought we covered everything over the phone, fax, emails!

So back to the question, how does one get lost in Germany? In my case, I traveled by myself for the first time halfway across the world and didn't speak their language. It's that easy! For The Amazing Race followers out there, you probably know what I'm talking about.

You must be wondering what I was doing getting lost in Germany on my own. I have a sister who, at that time, was working in Stuttgart for the last 5 years in a then small, unknown musical production called "Miss Saigon." The musical was about to end its run and my sister was ready to pack her things and move on with her life. She was ready to get married in London and I was coordinating her wedding while I was in Manila. One way or another, we eventually needed to meet to finalize the details. Plus, I was supposed to represent our side of the family in London. Which didn't happen because I never got to London. That's another story though.

Anyway, she sent me a step-by-step narrative on what I was supposed to do the minute I step out of the plane in Frankfurt. Frankfurt Airport is supposedly one of the busiest airports in Europe and the world.

Of course, I had to make sure all my travel documents were safely in place when I go through immigration. Next step was to find a foreign currency exchange counter to have enough Deutsche Marks (their money) to buy food, DB (train) ticket fare, a 50DM phone card enough to make a phone call to Stuttgart or Manila, in case, I needed to call them for emergencies or just to inform them that I arrived safely.

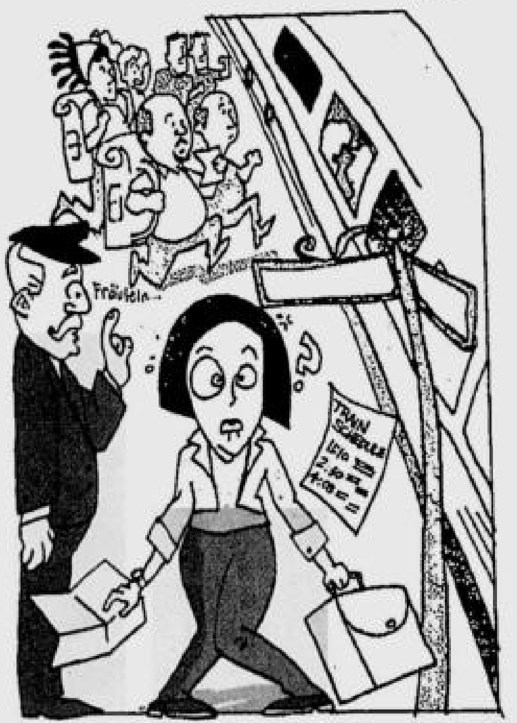


ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

And since Frankfurt airport is so big and Germans love riding trains from the airport, the instruction in my ala-Amazing Race envelope was to ride in some kind of airport transfer train going to another train station. I was reminded that chivalry has not died yet when a German offered to carry my luggage (no, not our famous balikbayan box) for me. Of course, I was on guard because everything I needed like clothes, personal things, even some documents were in the luggage so I kept close to the helpful gentleman. As a rule, one shouldn't talk to strangers.

For my next stop, I bought DB tickets at the train station so I could have a reserved seat when I travel. I was told that there are those who travel without any tickets and you could be thrown out the minute you get caught. I prefer to continue the next leg of my adventure.

Along the way, somewhere in Heidelberg, the train seemed to have stopped and I noticed several people get out. I didn't want to leave my seat even if I wanted to because of my big luggage in tow. After about 10-20 minutes of waiting, I noticed there were less people in the train so I took a peek outside and realized that I should have also left and transferred to the train that just left. Yes, the train left me.

So, the phone card I just bought came in handy. I called my sister and told her I think the right train just left me. She asked me if there was any announcement made and I think there was except that it was in Deutsch. She panicked and gave me instructions to go to a detour so I could catch up and reach my destination before dark. All the while, I still could not ask people for help except for sign languages. Plus, I remember my mom's advice to always look sharp even if you know you're lost, even if you have no idea what to do next. It's all in the presentation just like in the shampoo commercial!

So there, I found my way to the final league of my very own Amazing Race adventure, met my sister and enjoyed the rest of my stay in Germany.

By the way, did I mention my sister called the DBs main office and scolded them. Well, okay, maybe threatened them a bit that if something would happen they'd be responsible. The premise of her argument, being that there are many foreign travelers riding the train with the Schengen Agreement in force (basically, it means open border, I think, one visa for several countries) and they should announce whatever transfers or other instructions in English as well. And I guess, it worked because during my stay in Germany, I noticed the announcements were also in English.

Getting lost again

This is another train story. This time, my sister bought the tickets herself and handed them to me so I could travel from Stuttgart to Bochum. The trip should take about 4-6 hours by train.

I've been in Germany for a few weeks already when this happened and I don't think I've met her fiance then (my brother-in-law now). So I went to Bochum to meet my brother-in-law and watch another musical called "Starlight Express," where he was the resident director.

Both of them were working 6-8 shows a week and I wasn't. So I was the one who would have to go to them since my not so tight schedule permitted me to do some traveling.

So I was sent off to Bochum by my sister with all the instructions on a piece of paper. Again somewhere along the way, I had to change trains or transfer trains. It just so happened that there was a Frankfurt-Main train and a Maine train, I think. Not knowing any better, hungry and groggy from lack of sleep, I assumed it was the same. I guess I should have taken Maine and not Frankfurt-Main or vice versa because I found myself 2 hours behind schedule of my arrival time in Bochum. My brother-in-law waited for me outside the train station, freezing from the cold weather. He just came straight from work at the theatre when he went to pick me up.

When the train had a stopover, I decided to call my sister to tell her I was nowhere near Bochum because I got lost again. I don't know what kind of merry-go-round train rides I took because they all had certain schedules. I had to figure out which train goes to which line so I could make my travel plan. Should I take Train A and catch Train B or transfer to Train C so I could catch Train D. Confusing? Yes! Doesn't it remind you of The Amazing Race again?

This adventure, although not the first time, scared me more because it was very late at night. I left Stuttgart at around 6 p.m. and I was supposed to arrive at 11 p.m. or 12 midnight. Instead, I arrived at my destination, Bochum, sometime between 1 a.m. and 3 a.m. It was scary. But I learned to be braver when traveling alone because I could only depend on myself while uttering all the prayers I could remember.

The author still loves trains and would love to be lost in Germany with famous F1 racer Michael Schumacher.

Beat this, Dead Poets Society!

By Catherine Young
2bU! Correspondent

"SUCKING the marrow out of life," the phrase from my favorite movie, "Dead Poets' Society," has stayed with me for many years. Because of it, I have always sought to grasp the meaning of literature and to experience love, friendship and passion.

I know I am not alone when I say that poetry is irreplaceable. We are eternally marked by the snippets of wisdom that we get from reading poetry. Repeatedly, we read poetry to experience sudden realization.

But however we place poetry in our hierarchy of cultural values, many see it like they would Shakespeare: it is often complicated and difficult to understand; it is an ordeal that one goes through as a requirement in school.

There are reasons for the low regard of many of poetry. It may be that there is not enough time to appreciate poetry because of the stress of coping with day-today life. There is also a dearth of opportunities to appreciate poetry. Film and TV have hardly any room for poetry.

Sushi

Last semester, I took a Humanities class that gave my fellow classmates and me the chance to explore the written word. We got the chance to do performance poetry, which incorporates a bit of theater in poetry recitation, complete with costumes, props, and music. My friends Jorel, Caissa, James, Kara and I chose to perform Isabella Banzon's *Sushi*. It was a poem that consists of only three lines: "Also known as/ Phirripine meat/ Oh suzy."

The beauty of performance poetry is the freedom to interpret a piece. We interpreted the poem in light of the female: before, especially during the war, females were forced to sexually submit to soldiers. Now, many females choose to prostitute themselves for one reason or another.

Makeup and hassles

On the day of the performance, we were surprisingly calm for a group that did not even have formal rehearsals. Kara met me earlier during the day, and we hid ourselves in one of the Chemistry classrooms, where she applied heavy makeup on my eyelids to make me look Japanese. I twisted my hair up and stuck a couple of chopsticks into the knot for what we hoped could pass for the geisha look.

The jitters came when the other performers were stuck in the obnoxiously heavy traffic on Katipunan Ave. Five minutes before the event, Kara and I frantically texted our teacher. I could imagine the others fidgeting in the car as traffic mercilessly crawled like a crippled slug.

Fortunately, the event had not started yet when we rushed into the makeshift performance hall. Joanne, our friend who came for moral support, helped me put on my kimono and pin it in place. The kimono, a gift from my dad to my mom on his trip to Japan, had two enormous holes running from my triceps to my torso. We did not know what those holes were for and I was glad I still had my clothes on underneath.

Our teacher came over and told us we would be the fourth to perform. Thankful for the extra time yet tense for what was to come, we had a good laugh when one of the other teachers told Ma'am, *"Uy, may* foreigner *na ba tayo dito?"* and gestured to me and my meticulously safety-pinned costume. Oh well, I thought, if I couldn't get the Japanese accent right, then at least I look the part.

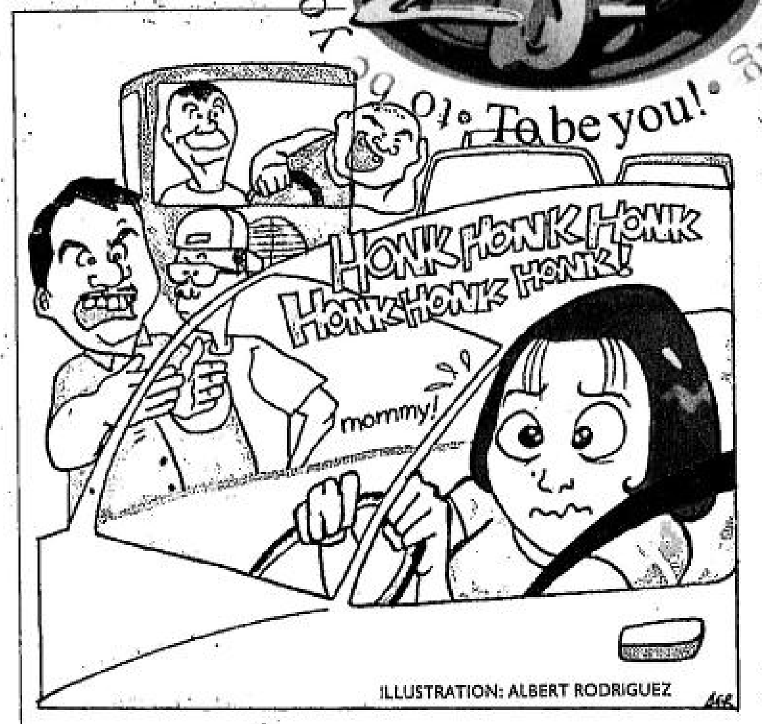
Ripped pants

Our performance barely lasted two minutes, yet the choreographed scenes made the desired impact on the audience. I doubt if they would think of sushi the same way again. But the heat of the lights combined with the tension made me appreciate my kimono's airholes.

Afterward, we laughed hysterically when James told us he ripped his pants in the middle of his rape scene. I still end up laughing to myself every time I think about it.

Later on, I became star-struck at all these famous writers who read their works. It was also interesting how fellow students performed their chosen poems. It was a happy fusion of the young neophytes and the older, more experienced generation all celebrating poetry. It was definitely one of the most memorable experiences I've had in college, not to mention one of the most interesting.

Poetry *is* alive after all; and its joys are not limited to dusty pages of books.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mommy!

ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

... to conquer an open road

By Catherine Young
2bU! Correspondent

CLUTCH, gear, gas. Clutch, gear, gas. These were the words running through my head over and over again as I clocked in my third hour at driving school. My instructor sat next to me, happily texting when we were not on the move, yet I could sense his foot poised on the pedal on his side of the dual-brake training car.

At 19, it's a necessity for me to learn how to drive. My school is quite a big place, and my current 7 a.m.-5:30 p.m. grind leads me to different buildings that puts me on a constant rush. In terms of punctuality, I'm a hypochondriac. Commuting by jeepney would suit me just fine, if I did not have a couple of huge bags filled with laboratory materials and hardbound books.

So it was this necessity that sent me to driving school during my semestral break. It was not the thrill that most other people connect with operating an automobile. It was not the arrogance that equates cars with a status symbol. I just did not want to get scoliosis from lugging my stuff around the school.

Open road

In the training car I was assigned to, I sat nervously, gripping the steering wheel. Even though I knew that my instructor was responsible and experienced, I could not avoid the fact that, in the strictest sense of the word, I was on my own. It was just me and the open road, or in this case, me, the abysmal traffic and the malfunctioning stoplights.

It was not the vehicular independence that unnerved me. It was the other cars that were going at outrageous speeds—driven by the more experienced drivers who looked like they could run you over. I have seen too many bodies of stray dogs squished flat on the road with their guts spread out to know that the streets are a ruthless domain. When I attended my first lecture class, one of the first things I had to watch were videos of head-on collisions. So much for subtlety. I was also concerned about pedestrians—little kids no older than seven years old coming home from school on their own, pregnant women crossing busy intersections, and jaywalkers cheating death.

Before learning how to drive, I already knew that this would be a stressful ordeal; the first time I was out on the road simply concretized my thoughts. Before, as a passenger, I did not mind the traffic or the long trips; I could doze off for a while or read a couple of pages. But as a driver, I had to be alert at all times, even when the traffic lights were blinking red. With the anxiety naturally experienced by a beginner, my foot was constantly pressed down on the clutch even when traffic was at a standstill.

On that fateful third day of driving, everything was going pretty well. I was on the last leg of our trip and was instructed to drive back. Poised on a rather inclined street, I made a right turn quite slowly. The engine died a couple of times because I had trouble with the steep slope. For a few moments, it was a bit embarrassing to have so many drivers honking their horns at the rear.

Road rage

It was at this particular turn that the accident happened. A speeding car that failed to beat the red light came out of nowhere, and I felt, as one would when driving a bump car at an amusement park, I could not just laugh it off. My training car had a lopsided bumper while the other car had an ugly gash running all the way across one side. It all happened so fast that I barely knew what just happened.

The next half hour gave me plenty of time to figure it out and to wallow. It was fortunate that no one got hurt. I was doubly lucky that it happened during my driving lessons, with my instructor knowing exactly what to do.

The fact that no one was injured made it easier for me to observe the interesting things that were going on. It was almost an Inquisition-like experience. I still had my seatbelt on; I was like the purported witch tied up for public display. My training car had cautionary labels stamped all over it, for all the world to blame me as the cause of the obstructive, albeit minor, wreck. To the onlookers, my scarlet letter was "C" for "Cannot drive." Many truck drivers were honking their horns, smiling knowingly and pointing. Pedestrians started to get together and analyze how the accident happened. It was a psychoanalytical project happening right before me.

The grueling part was going to the police station and giving my testimony. There's something about badges and uniforms (not to mention guns) that made me want to hyperventilate all the way to the station, even though the person responsible for the entire accident had not yet been established. I've never gotten in serious trouble in school before, and here I was at a police station, giving an affidavit. Oh yes, I'm bad to the bone. Whoopee.

Perhaps it was just my lucky day, but the policemen were actually, well, nice. Maybe my being a student made them a lot more lenient than if I were middle-aged. In any case, I went home and presented myself to my parents, showing them that I was alive and well before telling them about the accident. Shocked though my mom was, at least she saw that I was in one piece before she had time to worry. Heck, it was, after all, my responsibility. I spent the rest of the day sprawled on the couch watching old "Friends" videos, trying to get rid of my migraine.

The morning after

The morning after the incident, I was pretty much able to laugh the anxiety off. I was not traumatized and was able to get back on the horse. In fact, that accident made me a bit stronger and gave me more knowledge about being a street-smart. Perhaps if the accident was a serious one, it probably would take some time before I get behind the wheel again. Later, my friends shared their stories, and after comparing theirs with mine, I knew that I was really lucky.

The accident also gave me a lot to think about on the driving situation in our country, especially when the investigator told me that the pictures showed it was not my fault after all. The other driver did try to beat the red light, so it was his bloody driving that caused the accident. I was a bit ticked off since he lied through his teeth during the testimony, and even gave me this big cheesy smile.

What does it say about us Pinoys if we cannot even follow simple traffic rules? Perhaps this alone can help explain why our country is in such a mess. We choose the easy way out and discard what is just for what is expedient. But relieved that I was not held accountable, it made me more aware of how dangerous the streets really are. For years, I've always depended on able drivers and my dad to chauffeur me around. It was they who had to deal with those who broke the law. Now, it's my turn.

E-mail the author at cathy_young1@yahoo.com

... to survive a bus wreck

By Gobleth Moulic
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

NO one from the INQUIRER Northern Luzon Bureau office wanted me to go home in Pangasinan on Oct. 30, 1999.

Before I grabbed my luggage at 5:30 p.m., they tried but failed to convince me to cancel my trip on that day. And their reasons seemed logical. First, the chance to ride on the bus on that Saturday was slim, as workers and students were hurrying to get the last trip for the four-day All Souls' break. Second, it was getting dark and it was risky to travel at night, so the bureau chief suggested I took the morning trip the following day. "*Baka magka*-landslides *pa*," he said.

He was apparently referring to the landslides on Sept. 13 that year, which killed 17 people, mostly Baguio-bound college students, along Kennon Road. The only survivor, a distant relative from my hometown in Mangaldan, Pangasinan, died two weeks later. I was there to cover the accident, and saw how the boulders as wide as four meters buried the passengers alive, including my classmate's brother. Think about a flattened sardines can and you get the picture. Some of the bodies were badly mangled as rescuers meticulously took them out from passenger van.

I shivered when I suddenly remembered the ghastly images of the Kennon Road tragedy, but this did not stop me from going to the Byron bus terminal with my *pasalubong* in tow. I was optimistic I could go home safely because it wasn't raining, since rains may trigger soil erosion and eventually landslide. Besides, I would avoid Kennon Road and take the safer route—the Marcos Highway.

I patiently joined the long queue of students, workers and local tourists who, like me, seemed anxious to get home early. But how could the minibus, which looked old, accommodate more than 50 people?

Since I was third in line, I had my pick of the seats on the minibus. I remember my friends telling me to sit near the middle, which they claimed was the safest section of a bus. I chose the fourth row. The space was cramped, and several men stood crowding the center aisle. Beside me was a man from my hometown. A couple was seated in front of us. Most of the old women and children were at the back of the bus.

Agony's beginning

At 6 p.m., the bus started to move with around 60 passengers. Most of them were my *kabaleyan* (provincemates) so I felt secure.

My seatmate and I sat silently as the bus cruised along uneventfully for the first 30 minutes of the two-hour trip. We were traveling along a stretch of the Marcos Highway in Barangay Taloy Sur in Tuba, Benguet, when we were startled by an explosion. Thick smoke slowly billowed from the engine near the driver's seat. Almost suffocated by the fumes, the passengers started opening the windows.

At first, I thought the bus had merely suffered minor engine trouble, so I ignored the frantic cries of women and children all around me. The bus sped by a billboard, and through the open window, I caught a glimpse of a chilling warning. The sign read: "Accident Prone Area." We were approaching a dangerous section of the Marcos Highway. I started to pray.

Everything happened very fast. The bus started to careen wildly and we feared that the vehicle would fall off a deep ravine. Young men and women were shouting and praying loudly in three dialects—Pangasinan, Ilocano and Tagalog. I bowed down my head and called on God Jehovah and pleaded, "Help, please." As the faces of landslides victims ran through my brain, I took a deep breath and said, "This is it!" The man next to me shoved me aside and jumped out of the window as the bus skidded sharply. I have no idea how many times the bus turned turtle.

Something heavy fell on my chest, my head hit metal several times and my eyeglasses were shattered. Fortunately, the shards missed my eyes.

Seconds later, I could not move my right leg. A body was on top of me. But I kept on trying in vain to stand up. My single thought was to get out before the bus exploded. I could hear a man shouting: "*Yung mga nasa ibabaw, alis diyan! Kawawa ang mga nasa ilalim!*" It was very dark. I sensed somebody was moving beside me, and I grabbed his shirt and pleaded with him to help me. He tried to lift me, but he was bleeding. I shouted for help. Two men finally heard me and helped me out of the bus, which was lying on its right side.

Tranquility shattered

The tranquil village along the Marcos Highway was shattered by cries of bloodied men and women. Some lost their body parts. Others were shocked and dazed. A father was screaming for his child while another man was desperately searching for his wife. I was groping in darkness looking for my traveling bag.

A bus headed for Baguio pulled to a stop on the highway and picked up a group of injured victims. When I boarded the bus, I saw my fellow passengers who were critically injured. "*Manong, dalhin niyo muna 'yung mga sugatan sa ospital. Mamaya na lang ako*," I told the driver. But he was reluctant. "Ading, *sakay ka na, baka may* internal injury *ka*." Insistent to recover my belongings, I stayed behind.

I realized, however, I was in shock and in pain. Two men lifted me and put me on a Baguio-bound Genesis bus, together with other passengers. I asked a woman passenger, who turned out to be a social worker in Baguio, to dial my bureau chief's number and informed him about the accident.

When I arrived at the Baguio General Hospital, a radio reporter interviewed me. Since I was then new in Baguio, he had no idea I was working for the INQUIRER. I was wheeled to the emergency room but was left in one corner as the doctors and nurses were busy attending to the critically injured. An hour later, a man died while undergoing treatment. He was my seatmate. Four others also passed away and 37 others were injured.

When my bureau chief arrived at the hospital, he asked the doctors why no one was checking on me. Puzzled, the doctor looked at me and said, "*Bakit, nadisgrasya ka rin ba? Nasaan ang sugat mo?*" I stared at my body.

Unscathed

There was no injury. Then I looked at one male passenger at the emergency room. He had a deep wound in the head and his face was disfigured. I looked myself in the mirror. My braces were intact, and my face and arms bore no cuts or wounds. But my shirt was soaked with blood. I realized it was the blood of an injured passenger who fell on top of me when the bus turned turtle. That same night, I was discharged from the hospital.

The following day, I went to Saint Louis University Hospital for a check-up. After an X-ray was performed on my skull, I found that I had escaped with mere contusions on my right leg and on my back. "*Buti ka pa. Yung nurse namin* is still in a coma for head injuries," a doctor told me. I immediately went to the ICU room where the nurse was confined. I learned that she underwent several surgeries after her face was severely damaged. Fortunately, she survived. A day after the accident, I did not take a day off. Though limping, I reported to the office to write the story. A reporter who later interviewed me, teased me, saying, "*Akala ko nascoopan mo kami*, Gob. *Yun pala, ikaw ang istorya.*"

During the hearing at the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board, I asked other passengers if they wanted to file a class suit against the bus company. They just shook their heads and said they had no money to pursue the case, as some of the passengers were vegetable and fish vendors. Upon my lawyer's advice, I sued the driver for reckless imprudence resulting in physical injuries. A year after, however, I withdrew the case against the bus driver when his lawyer told me his client suffered from amnesia after the mishap. Alibi or not, I forgave them all. What is important is I'm alive and well.

Now you can't blame me why I'm scared of speeding vehicles and crossing a busy street. I cheated death twice. The first was when I was supposed to take that ill-fated commuter van to Baguio on Sept. 13, when all 18 people on board were killed by landslides.

Gobleth is an editorial assistant of the PDI Northern Luzon Bureau in Baguio City.

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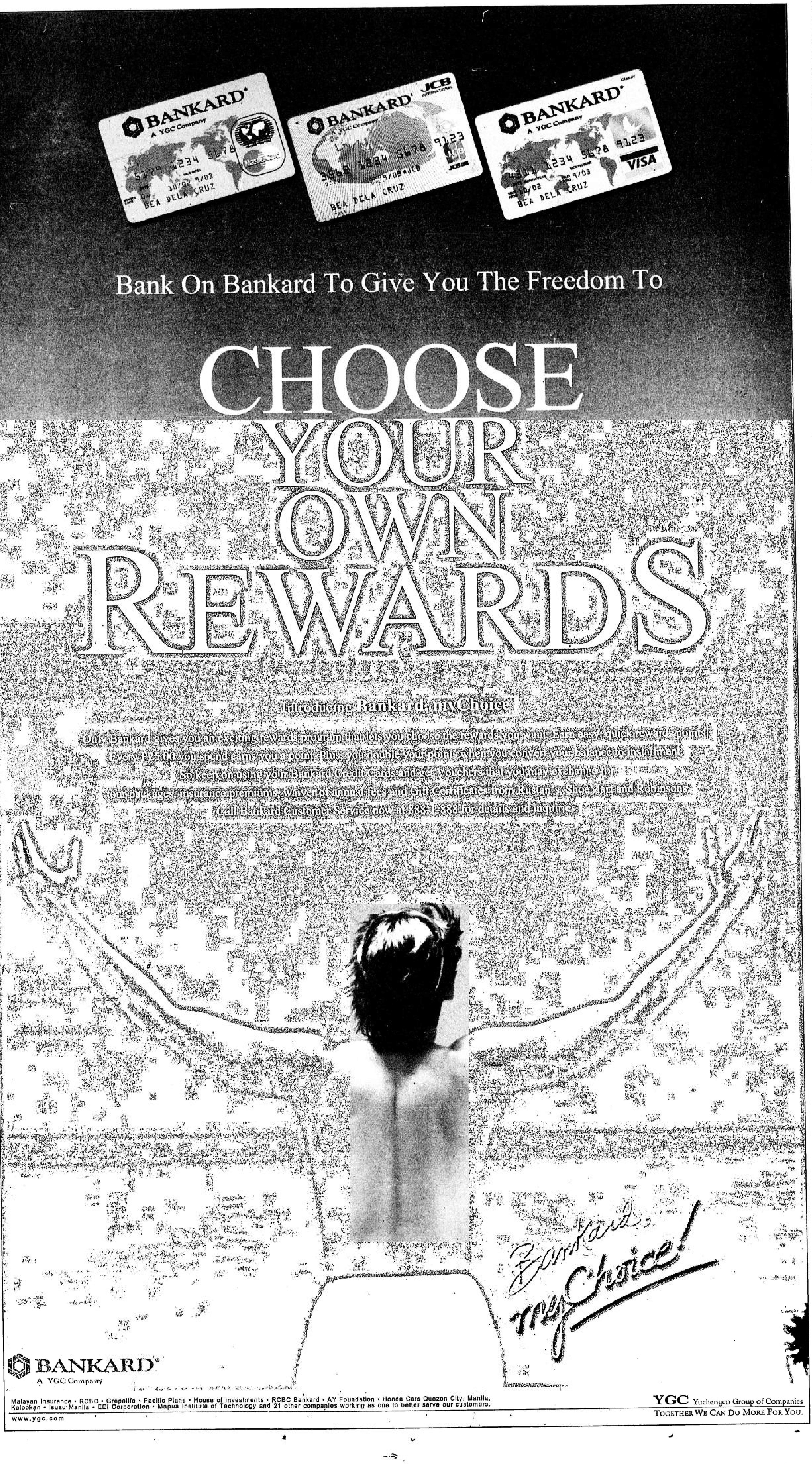
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Living with cerebral palsy

ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

By Peter Jonas David
2bU! Contributor

I WAS born with an incurable condition known as Cerebral Palsy because of premature birth. When people ask me what's it like to be handicapped, I find it difficult to answer, even though I have had this condition all of my life. Maybe it's because I was not given the chance to experience life as it seems to "normal people," and so I do not know what's like not to be. Or maybe because I am so used to it that, paradoxically, I find it hard to comprehend and difficult to explain. Maybe that's just what it is—difficult.

In what ways is it difficult? Every day, people go through their business at a rapid pace. Although I know that time is valuable and must not be wasted, I simply cannot move

LIVING/ p.D2

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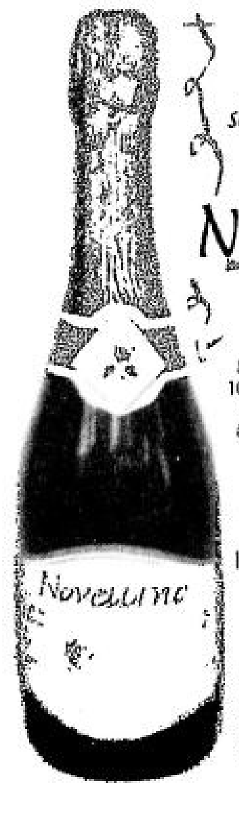

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Living with cerebral palsy

From page D1

as fast as my "able" counterparts. I always feel that the world around me is in fast forward and I am stuck in slow motion. In order to compensate for this, I have to manage my time on much stricter terms. In a way, this has taught me self-discipline and the value of time. My belief is that a turtle can win against the rabbit if he starts early, and I have proven this to be true.

Stares

Every day, I also have to deal with people who stare at the disabled. At first, I found it hard to understand why they would do such a thing. My first impulse was to hurl my crutches at them to make them feel how hurt I was. Good thing that I never gave in to such an impulse and started taking things in perspective. Now I think: Maybe it's the first time they are exposed to someone like me and, naturally, they stare because they are curious and interested. Believe me, if I had not adopted this view, I would have self-destructed and I would not have been able to write this article. By taking on this stance, I have learned to control my temper and understand people better.

Discrimination is another thing I have to contend with. Just because I am like this, people tend to judge me prematurely. This kind of prejudice has a wide scope—from courting a girl to finding a job. But unfair as it is, I admit that I can only do so much. If people want to look at me in a certain way, that is their prerogative. All I can do is prove to them that this kind of bias is unfounded and that disabled people can do special things in special ways. If there is such a stereotype for the handicapped, I refuse to be boxed in such a label and try to prove that I can do more. This has been one of my mottos in life: To do more with less. It's not what you don't have but what you have that counts.

> When imperfections are won over, a better person comes out. Nobody can be perfect but everybody can get better

Depression

Although being differently abled has taught me to be tough, there are still times that depression comes. Depression is one of the most difficult things, if not the most difficult, someone like me must face. Hopelessness can kill if you do not know how to handle it. Suicide is not a stranger to me. But one of the main reasons I have not fallen to its trap is a positive outlook in life. Nobody is perfect and each one of us has a handicap; mine is just more "external." This view makes me feel better.

I do not consider myself different from the others; rather, I am just having my own share of difficulties. I look at the world around me and I see imperfection. But along with imperfection is variety. Because of the variety, there is also a variety of imperfections, and my imperfection is just one the varieties. Everyone has to carry a cross, and I have vowed to carry mine with determination.

I often ask myself why I am disabled and suffering. The answer that I have found is that when imperfections are won over, a better person comes out. Nobody can be perfect but everybody can get better. Overcoming our imperfections is one way of getting better.

It is definitely a positive outlook and a strong will that keep me from breaking down from all the pain and suffering. After all that I have been through, I am able to say I have a unique life—unique experiences, unique problems—that has formed the unique person that I am. I have survived because of the strong will to live and a positive outlook in life. Understanding comes from within yourself and you cannot expect anybody to understand you. As Nietzsche said, "What does not kill you will only make you stronger."

Jonas, 22, graduated with a B.A. Philosophy from the University of the Philippines, cum laude. He is currently taking his second degree in Philosophy in the same university.

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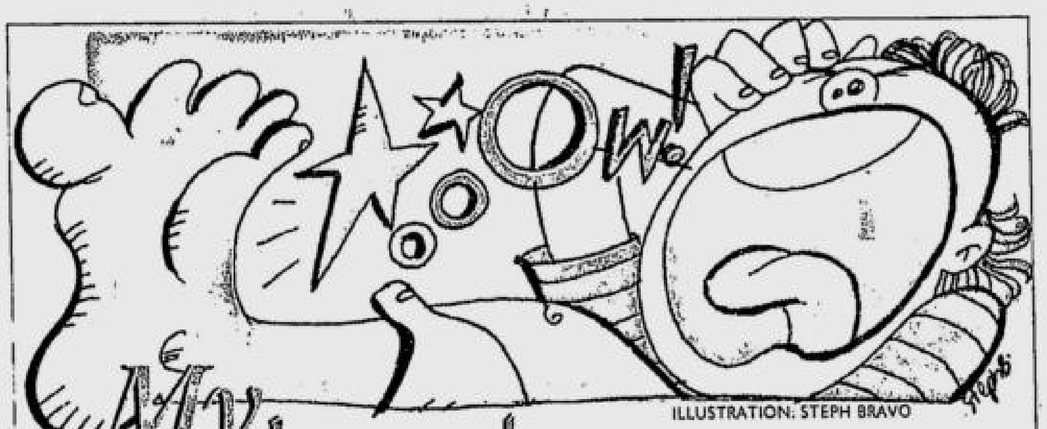

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

My 'Sad Broken Bone' saga

By Ditas Kahlo
2bU! Contributor

I NEVER think of myself as accident-prone, but I've broken two bones in my life—one in my arm and one in my foot. That's two more than the usual for normal people. That has also earned me the title "Household Klutz," which, I think, is unfair. After all, I know skaters who've broken more bones than the years they've been alive, but while I'm pretty active, I don't indulge in death-defying sports.

As body parts go, there's nothing even remotely interesting about bones. Hence, you take their existence for granted. I know what a femur is. I know enough to take calcium so that my bones can be stronger. I know that osteoperosis is a bad bone disease. Other than these, I just wish they were longer so I would look better in my jeans.

So you'd think that after breaking them, you'd be more interested in what they're called, but no; as with any other kind of sickness, all you can do after you break a bone is piss and moan that your foot/arm/leg has swollen to the size of a baby papaya, and you're going to be immobile for six weeks.

The first time I broke a bone, I was 13. I was a high school freshman on summer vacation. For fun, I'd ride those tiny horses that come up to your waist in my *lolo's* farm. I'd sit bareback on these tiny horses, going around my *lolo's* estate and feel like Mikee Cojuangco. Except that one time, I rode a tiny horse that wasn't very well trained and fell off on a curve. (Yeah, I tried holding on to my horse's hair, but I guess that was equal to a *sabunot* because all the horse did was go faster.) And yes, my arm swelled like a fraternity man's paddle (it looked like it was paddled, too) and, since my *lolo's* farm was in the nether regions of Mindoro, a *manghihilot* had to come and fix it, since the nearest hospital was 24 bumpy road hours away.

> Being provisionally disabled taught her some lessons, such as random cute guys are always willing to help

Much of the time spent with that broken bone I managed to block in a pain-filled haze, but one thing I do remember is that my arm was tied to a plank to set the bone, and since it healed wrong, I had to have it rebroken when I got back to Manila.

Lesson, my foot

Apparently, the universe didn't think I had learned anything much about clumsiness and willfulness from my broken arm. Hence, I broke another bone (my foot this time) early this year.

How did it happen? I was supposed to meet my boyfriend in the Glorietta theater to watch "Austin Power's Goldmember." But it was a Friday. It must've been payday because the traffic was slower than a French Baker line at 50-percent off time. At any rate, I thought I was late. I started running across the parking lot in my four-inch heels and broke a tiny bone in my foot. What kills me is that I didn't think I broke it at the time, so I was able to walk up four flights of stairs (plus basement stairs). But by the end of the movie, my foot had swollen to the size of a baby papaya. And I could not move. I could, however, hop in little increments. It took me 20 minutes to get from my chair to the entrance of the theater, where my boyfriend borrowed a rolling chair from the security guards of Ayala Center (God bless their souls) and pushed me across the parking lot into the car.

Unfortunately, because my boyfriend has Makati Med trauma (two of his friends died because they were misdiagnosed at the ER), he wanted me to wait to see my *ninong* (who heads the orthopedic division in Manila Med) the next day. Which meant that while I was in pain and dying because of my swollen foot, we had to fight over which hospital I would go to! Unfortunately, I was totally at his mercy because I couldn't walk away (duh).

He eventually brought me to the Orthopedic Hospital. Although it's supposed to be the best hospital for bones, it was also decrepit and sad. People were sleeping outside the hospital, waiting for their loved ones to be treated. The good thing was I only had to pay for nothing except the materials. The bad thing? I didn't get the type of cast you could write on, because I only needed a soft cast—it was a slipper cast that was wrapped in stretchy cloth. So I couldn't even get the satisfaction of making cute guys sign my cast.

I felt stupid and disabled. I had to borrow crutches from an aunt who was in a sailing accident, but she was so tall that her crutches made calluses on my armpits. I ended up buying my own crutches.

Unkind to the disabled

After a week, I realized that the Philippines is horribly prejudiced against the disabled. Every sidewalk, every cluttered roadside, every gutter that's flooded is an insult to a person who can't rightly walk on two feet. Even public transportation—the MRT, the jeeps and buses—are so hard to use. You're better off staying at home if you have a broken leg. Can you imagine getting on a jeep if you're in a cast? Plus, it kept raining! By the end of the week, the stretchy white cloth that I used to wrap my cast looked like *basahan*.

Thank God, we had an automatic car that I could drive. Some days, though, when my sister had to use it, I had to take a cab to work. Even that was a big hassle because I had to cross the street and the road was uneven.

Some perks I got from being in a cast were evident early on: random cute guys had no qualms about asking me what happened to my foot and helping me carry my stuff and open doors. However, since I couldn't go out, my contact with random cute guys (except at work) was close to nil. But there were also the uncaring ones: some people still stole my cabs, my officemate didn't want to switch chairs with me in a restaurant, and I got elbowed once by a girl in a hurry to cross the street.

Anyway, I learned the following things from my six-day bout with plaster:

- It's easier to accept niceness from people when you're disabled, because you're not suspicious. Every girl I know has *tambay*-radar: we get harassed by the "Miss, Miss—I *lab* you!" idiots on a daily basis, so when someone of the wife-beater variety comes up to us, we are automatically wary. In dangerous places, our bags are clutched to our armpits like crusty deodorant. We avoid people's gazes, don't smile at anybody.

  But in a cast, it's different. You know people are being nice to you not because they want to hit on you or give you a stupid cheesy line. You know they're being nice out of the goodness of their hearts, because you can't walk, not because they're envisioning you naked in their shanties. And you have to be nice because without them to move chairs around your path or clear the road, you're bound to slip on wet floors and land on your head with your crutches in a kung-fu tangle.

- You can't be a snooty *mestizo* in a cast. Because you want everyone's help, you have to smile, be nice—to everyone—the security guards, the taxi drivers, the *manang* on the street. Because if you're *masungit*, there are bigger chances that someone will elbow his way past you such that you will fall on the road in the way of a speeding bus. Maybe not intentionally. But there's a bigger chance.
- If you're disabled, you have to be prettier. Because everyone stares at you, better make sure you look good. In a way, this is good: men love helping out cute helpless females, not knowing that in six weeks, (or as soon as your cast comes off), you're going back to being a b---h again.
- You have to fight the urge to eat everything in sight when you're in a cast. Because you're immobile and can't exercise, at the end of your six-week healing period, you're going to be a big fat blob. In fact, the only thing that was the size of a baby papaya when I got my cast off was my tummy. I still have it to this day.
- Your cast, when it comes off, will stink. To high heavens, my foot did. You know the times when you're wearing leather maryjanes or boots and you forgot to wear socks, but they look so good with your flared jeans you wear them anyway? That even though at the end of the day your feet smell like you've been dancing in garbage barefoot and the only people who can stand to smell you are the people who truly love you? Multiply that smell by a thousand, and that's the post-cast removal smell. So, when you get your cast off, make sure you have industrial strength alcohol/acetone/thinner to clean the skin that's grafted above your broken bone. Trust me, you'll need it.

Being on a cast made me think of my friend Bert, who's lived with polio all his life. In the beginning, I'd treat him just like any other guy in my life (i.e., badly). As if he didn't have one shriveled leg as a disability. I'd yell at him for walking too slow, or I wouldn't drive him home because I was too lazy. Now though, I am more considerate. I knew how bad it felt when other people would leave me to open doors by myself, or see me struggling without bothering to help me! So the next time you meet someone in a cast, be nice. After all, you never know when you're going to fall off your four-inch heels.

Ditas is a 20-year-old member of Klutzes Anonymous.

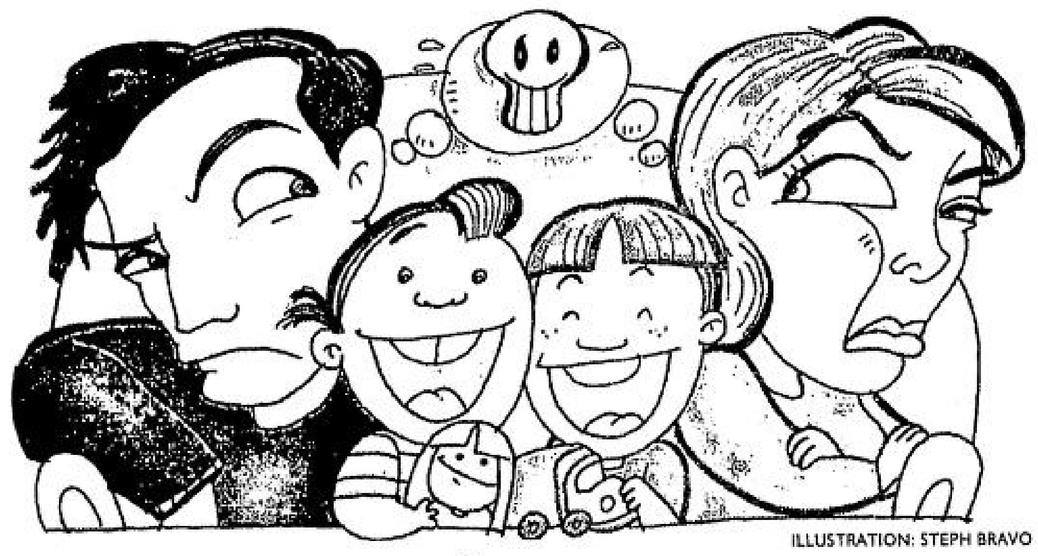

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

Growing up happy and whole in a broken home

By Daphne Anteros
2bU! Correspondent

I AM THE product of a broken family. After years of hostility and awkward moments of silence, my parents decided to separate when I was still very young. I don't remember much about the time when we all lived under the same roof, and the only mementos I had of those times were a few family pictures, with my parents' faces frozen in stiff smiles while we children grinned happily from ear to ear. I'm pretty sure my parents did love each other very much at some point, but it was such a long time ago that it was hard for me to imagine the two of them that way.

When they painfully told us about the separation, I had to feign shock because even at that early age, I had a good grasp of the situation and had already seen it coming. Sad though I was, I couldn't pretend that I felt shattered about the whole thing.

Don't get me wrong, I badly wanted to be with both of my parents. But I didn't relish the thought of us kids spending the rest of our lives caught in a perpetual cold war. So after filing for legal separation, my mother was awarded custody of us children, and my father was granted visitation rights.

It was hard for a while; we struggled to go on with our lives as if nothing were wrong. But some things just didn't feel right, like not expecting our dad to come home every night or having to explain to his business associates over the phone that he didn't live in our house anymore. Worse, my fierce pride was having trouble dealing with the overwhelming amount of pity that came from friends and relatives.

Immense relief

But what I didn't count on was this feeling of immense relief, as if a huge cloud of smog was lifted off my heart. I missed my dad, but knowing that both he and my mom were much, much happier apart than they were together, was more than enough for me to be happy as well.

So happy, in fact, that I wish that each of them would find someone they could really love enough to grow old with. I can't speak for my siblings, since my sister seems complacent about the whole arrangement and my brother is still too young to understand, but I'm certain they echo my sentiments in their own way.

Despite growing up in a broken home, I can proudly say that both of my parents have raised us well. We are all hardworking and diligent. We are not into drugs or other vices, and have healthy relationships with the people around us. We have run against the prevalent notion of kids from broken homes turning into criminals, bums or shady characters.

I can only hope that other children like us would understand the situation well and not harbor any resentment toward their parents. We might think that we could've done something to prevent it, but no matter how hard we try, we can't make our parents love each other again because it's not in our power to begin with. The best thing we can do is to accept their decision and continue to love them as devoted children should. If there's one thing I learned, it's not because of us that they chose to part ways; rather, they did it *for* us, so that we could live in a household free from animosity and thus, grow up to be the best individuals we can be.

As for me, I'm living out the rest of my young adult life as normally as possible. I have shed my tears and nursed the pain in my heart, but there's no reason to be sad any longer. While I admit that I would sometimes feel wistful and envious of my friends whose parents are still very much together, I only need to recall the now relaxed and happy faces of my own mom and dad, and I would be at peace, knowing that this is the best arrangement for all of us. And believe me, I wouldn't have it any other way.

Despite her parents' separation, Daphne still believes in love and would like to have a family of her own someday.

She had known the marriage would end in a separation even as a child, so when it came, she felt immense relief

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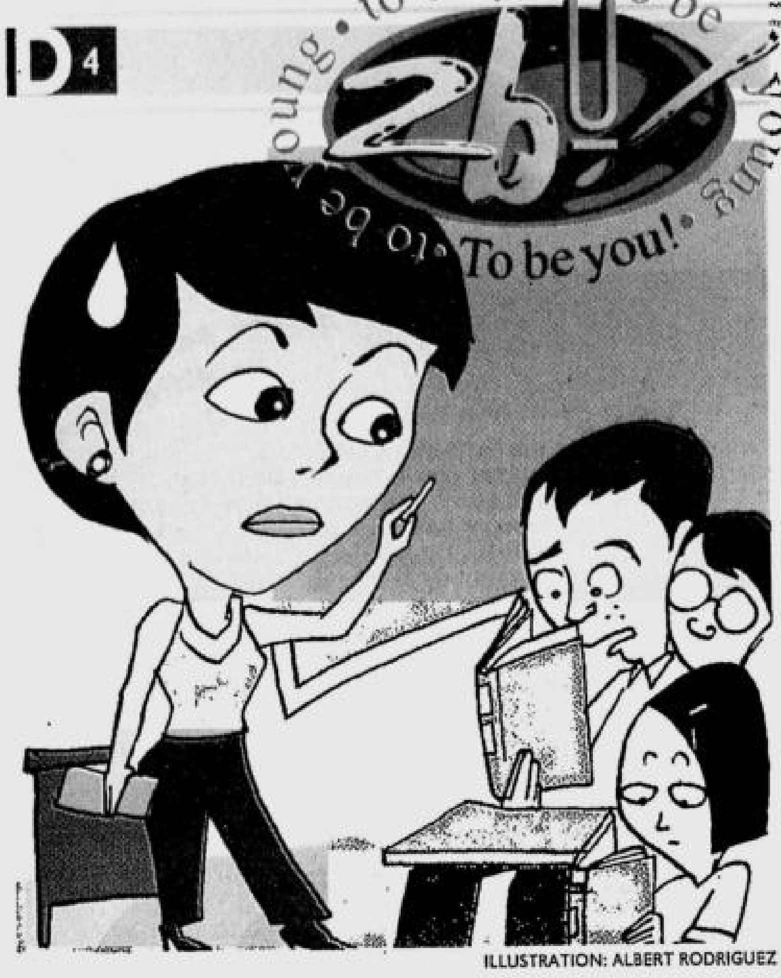
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ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

What it was like to teach high school

By Ivy S. Papa
2bU! Correspondent

I COME from a family of teachers, a whole clan in fact. I guess you could say it was written in the stars that I'd find myself teaching one day although I hadn't really set out to do so. Maybe at that time I had overdosed on books and movies with teachers who inspired their students to greatness or, if not exactly greatness, then plain, old everyday-variety brilliance. All I know is that I suddenly had this desire to teach. I, myself, hadn't encountered a teacher whom I found interesting enough to move me until I was in college and I've constantly thought that was a pity. High school would have been a prime time for somebody to urge me a la Robin Williams to "make my life extraordinary." Having missed that chance, I determined to do exactly that for my future students. It would have been my own effort at oblation since I knew that I really wouldn't be earning much.

So, acting upon that certain itch to teach, I set forth to find a suitable post. I preferred a small school, still growing, so I could make my mark and definitely be a part of its progress. I ended up in an obscure little school in Antipolo with a population of roughly 35 students per level, teaching English to all four high school classes.

Almost as soon as I stepped inside a classroom, the rosy vision of nobility or altruism popped like a bubble and I saw myself in front of my students. I found myself staring into their eyes, striving to detect even just a glimmer of intelligence. I think I was disappointed or overwhelmed by the presence of something else, something I'd always scorned, this combination of apathy and insolence. I wasn't targeted immediately, but knowing it was there caused me disquiet.

My first activity with them was the usual first day introductions. I had asked them to cite things they liked and disliked, as well as the title of their favorite book. I had prepped myself to hear that the girls' favorite book was something written by Jude Deveraux or for boys to claim that they read comic books instead, but I ended up hearing intimations that they didn't do any reading at all. Of course, there was a handful of people who offered a few titles and I almost applauded when one boy said that he liked reading Tom Clancy. The lack of reading all began to make sense upon noting the state of the library and the fact that the students didn't even know about the Dewey Decimal System.

I began to see how my work was definitely cut out for me. I had intended to focus more on literature, assuming that basic grammar would have been covered in grade school, but more fool me for believing that. I absolutely felt a sense of panic about the seniors who still couldn't even string together a simple sentence in English, much less diagram it. It's a wonder I hadn't gone crazy reading and correcting their papers, although I almost did checking the test paper of one of the freshmen who incredibly mistook my exam for one in Science.

As the school year progressed, the culture shock began to wear off and I and my students started to get used to each other. It took me a while to realize that they had suffered some shock at their end, too. I was nothing like their other teachers, a fact I later decided to capitalize on. Since my contract didn't require me to wear the teachers' uniform, I was able to exhibit my own singular style, which, although less austere or respectable than the average teacher's, managed to intrigue my students. I also tried to make studying grammar and literature something that they could relate to. Sentences they had to work on reeked of popular lyrics and showbiz *chismis*.

It also helped that I was assigned to become moderator for the Literati Society. The members and I endeavored to have the most fun, the most activities, and therefore, the most achievements in the school. My kids were constantly envied for the field trips we went on and at the end of the year, I was positive that they had imbibed enough culture and art.

Nothing dramatic really happened. My students didn't become English whiz kids overnight. In fact, they didn't even become English whiz kids at all. But they did learn a lot. I might not have performed miracles, but when I left, they had already read N.V.M Gonzalez, Pearl Buck, Thomas Hardy, Colette, et al (depending on their year level). They also experienced expressing themselves through writing and I think that they probably wouldn't write as many papers again until they reach college. In the interim, I earned the burden of knowing about their lives and their problems, leading me to question, what exactly did I know? My own life had been idyllic in comparison, but those little revelations I gathered from their writings made me more considerate and understanding.

They felt comfortable enough to kid around with me. My students drew great amusement from mimicking me and they were pretty good—the glare, the signature arched brows, the twang that occasionally slipped out, and those precious lines like, "Is that for my class?" (upon catching students composing love letters during my class), "Oh, shut your cakehole!" (after getting fed up with their wiseassing), and the infamous "Easy exams are for dumbbells." (when they complained that my exams were too hard). They also unkindly teased me about my size since they towered over me, but I remained good-natured through it all.

I allow myself to say that, at least, I was a teacher who had left an impression. I had wanted to be a teacher who would rock their world and I believe that I did that. I rocked in a sense that I jarred their high school life a bit. Some didn't like that especially when it involved their grade. You really can't win them all, but in the end, I felt that I was really able to reach out and touch lives. I wanted to continue, but I was pretty confused about everything and still had a lot of growing up to do. I felt that I had to compromise so much and my idealism was at stake, in this case, dealing with the establishment, not with the students. Now, after two years, I miss all the creativity and sharing in teaching and I'd go back to it like a shot if given the chance.

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NU's new offsprings of Rock

By Maui V. Reyes
2bU! Correspondent

"WHO ROCKS your world?" Or so asks this year's NU 107 Rock Awards. The annual awards show that boasts of honoring the very best in Pinoy Rock is once again giving out those coveted glass trophies to 14 lucky winners, including In the Raw Award, which is given out to the best unsigned band, and the Listener's Choice Award, which the fans get to vote for (and by far the award most bands want to vie for, since it's the popular award).

While this year's list of nominees is plastered with big names such as Rivermaya, Slapshock, Greyhoundz, Cheese and Parokya ni Edgar, new players are taking a swing at the award. Rookies Acel Bisa of Moonstar 88 and Jun Jun Regalado of Mojofly, and directors like Avid Liongoren, whose "Mottaka" is up for Best Rock Video of the Year, have joined the roster.

Instead of showcasing again the top bands that have had their own share of exposure, 2bU! will profile the nominees for Best New Artist—four new bands amid the sea of rap-rock bands and big-name artists.

Remember these faces. They will be huge.

Bridge

Johnoy Danao, (vocals, rhythm guitars), Jon Danao (lead guitars), Edmund Apostol

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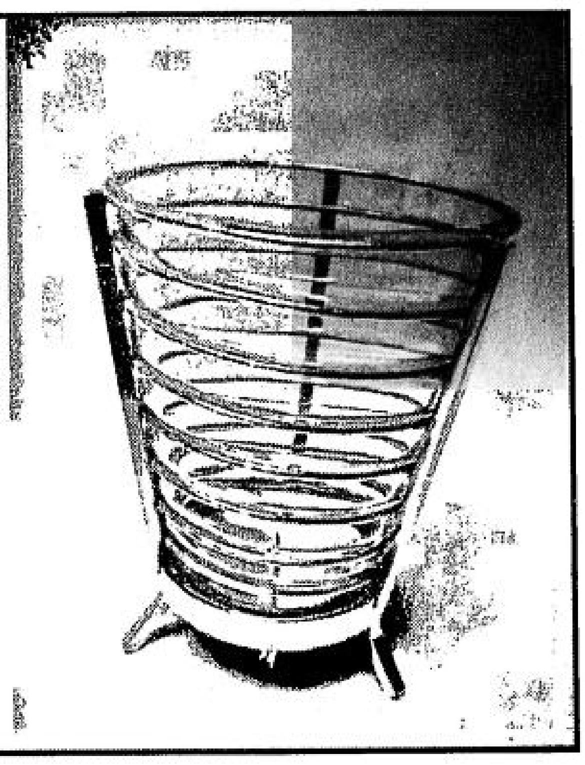

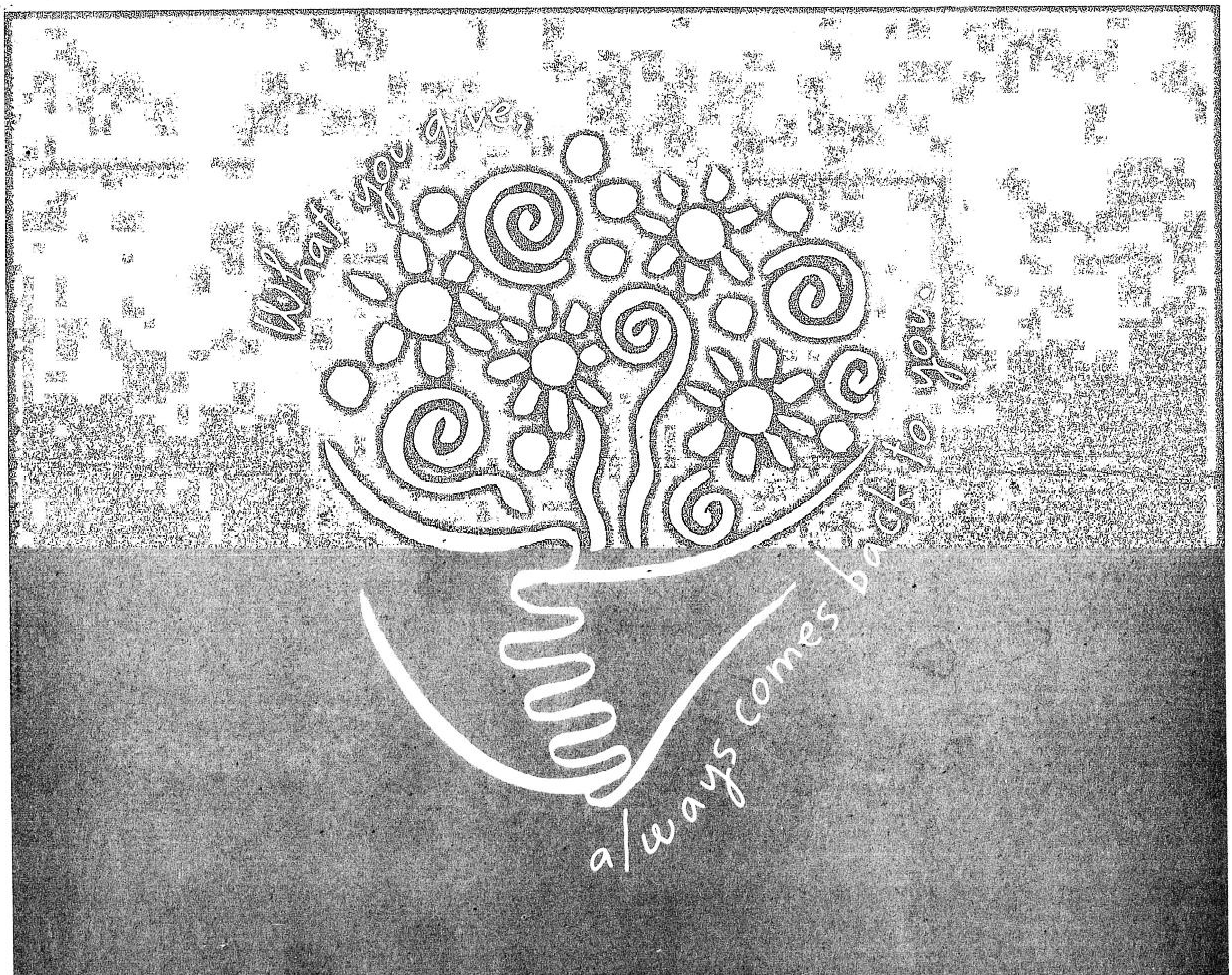
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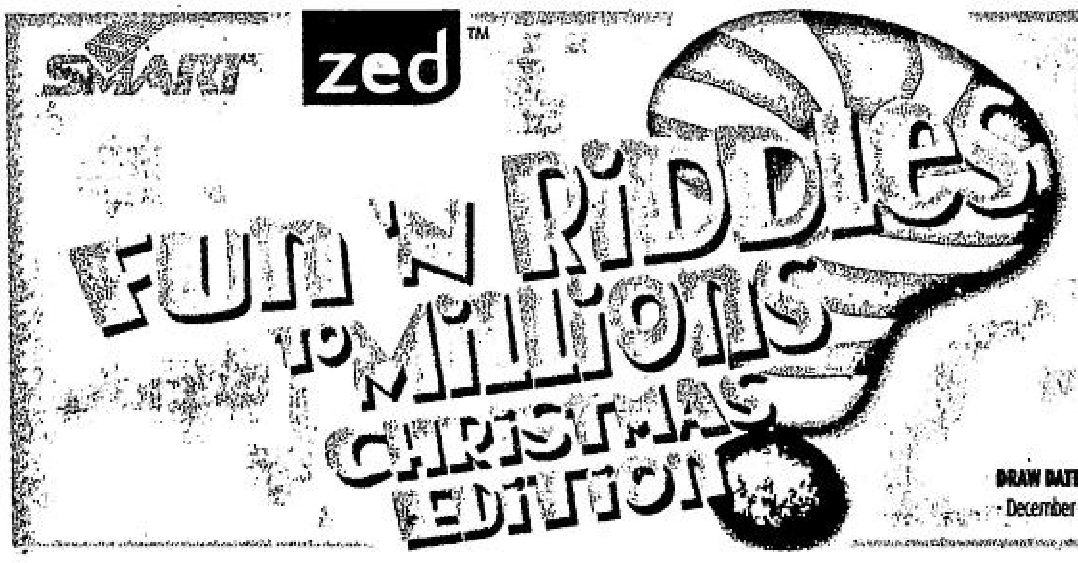

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BRIDGE ROCKS IT OUT. Edmund Apostol, Jon Danao, manager Mike Tameta, Jonhoy Danao and Jong Cabitas

A COUPLE OF BLUE JEANS. Clockwise from top: Nino Mendoza, Edwin Coo and Lauren Oremdaim, Law Fero and John Brown

PHOTOS BY ALDWIN ASPILLERA
MONSTERBOT PHOTO COURTESY OF MCA UNIVERSAL.

NU's new offsprings of Rock

From page E1

(bass), Jong Cablitas (drums)

Name Game: It was in UP Diliman where cousins Johnoy and Jon began performing—in girls' dormitories. While jamming at their hangout at the dorm dubbed "the bridge," both of them started serenading girls at different dorms, even past curfew, which earned them the reputation of being the *"harana"* duo on campus. In 1998, with then-drummer Ryan, the band was invited to play in a gig at Katipunan. There and then they picked up Edmund to play the bass. It was then that "Bridge" was born, named after the place where they jammed and wrote songs. By March 1999, with their four song-demo entitled "Piece of Paradise" (which later became the name of the debut LP), Bridge was named Band of the Month by MP3Manila.com.

Reminds you of: Think John Mayer crossed with an acoustic Matchbox Twenty and a little bit of the Dave Matthews Band. Their manager, Mike Tameta, says that what made him take the guys in was their "Uniqueness in sound. They take the basics of Sting and Dave Matthews into their song writing." The music is also a big breather from all the loud rock bands bursting into the scene. It's a soothing kind of lounge rock, and listening to the band's album is nothing compared to seeing them live. Their album, "Piece of Paradise," consists of 10 superb tracks fuelled by catchy guitar hooks and great vocals. The band wrote all songs. The songs cover issues untouched by most bands ("Who's Next" is inspired by the street children of Metro Manila). Of course, they cover the usual topics on life and love. *"Nagmamadali"* speaks of a relationship begging for an ending. The single, "Stay," has "Top 40" written all over it, with lyrics like "Well I see your smile again / hope it lasts tomorrow / 'cause whatever which way / this dance will go / I'll try to keep in step with you," with a catchy melody to boot.

Best Gig: They like intimate gigs with a small audience. "We're a cozy band," Johnoy says.

Worst Gig: "It was at a private party," Jon starts. "The sound system was horrible, it was for DJ's. But we still pulled through."

Whom they'd want to see win: They root for these deserving of the awards, but are rooting especially for Rivermaya.

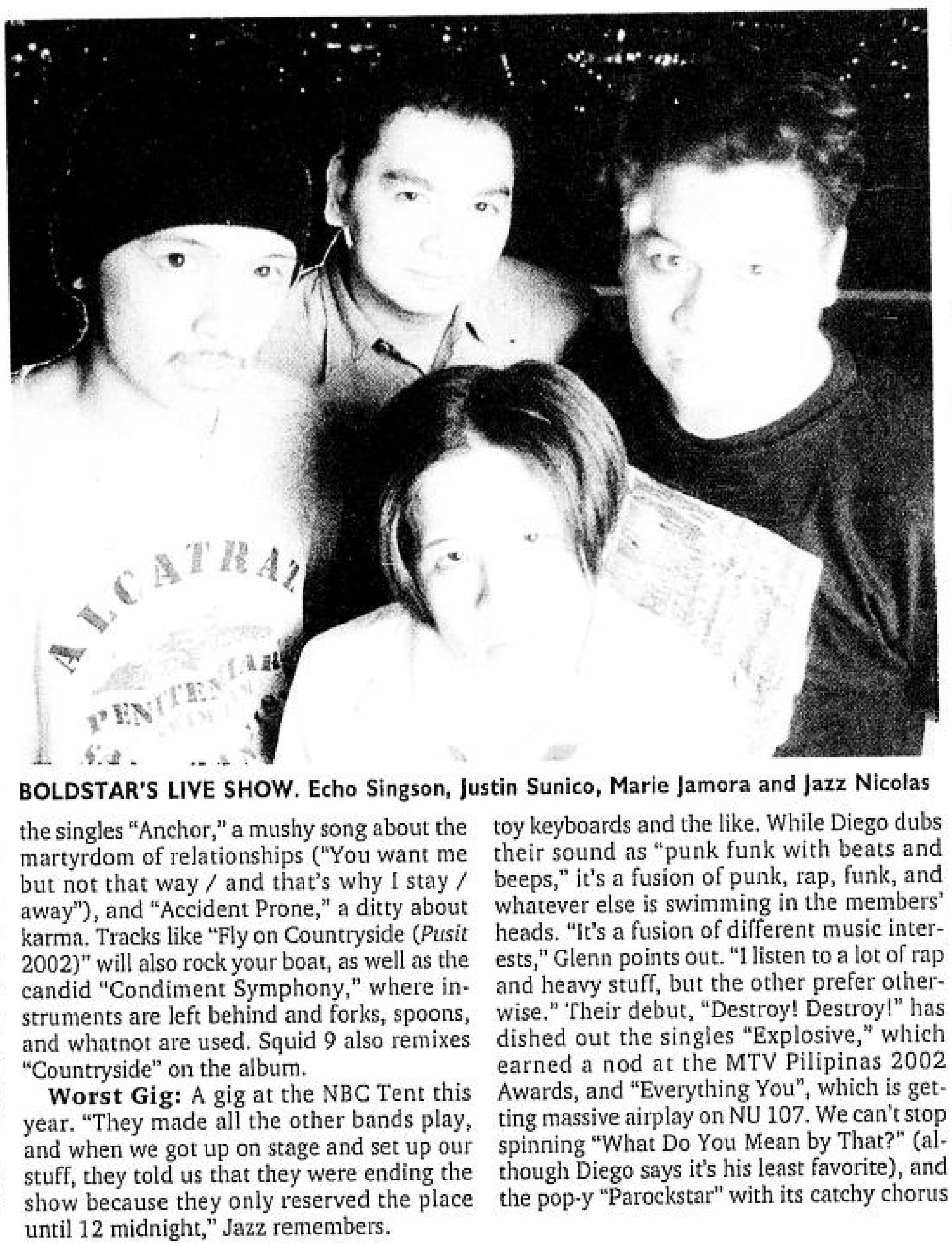
Category they'd most likely win: Jong jokes that they'd win "Band Trying to Look Like a Band" award, while Mike says they ought to bag "Band Best in *Ukay* Goods".

Boldstar

Marie Jamora (drums), Jazz Nicolas (bass), Echo Singson (guitars), Justin Sunico (guitars)

Boldstar 101: Jazz, also the drummer of the band itchyworms!, and Marie, the drummer of the now defunct cover band Blast Ople, both decided to come up with a band where Jazz would play drums and Marie would don the bass. Echo joined on guitars, and Justin, who also makes up a fourth of the band Ciudad, jumped on the bandwagon. They called themselves Ooky Spooky, and covered Smashing Pumpkins and various 60's songs. Deciding to write originals, Boldstar was born after Marie resumed her position behind the drums and Jazz on bass. (Nicolas points out that the name has no meaning, just that it "sounds nice.")

Sound: "You Must Have Been a Beautiful Something... What Are You, Really?" is an album with a multiple personality. Each track doesn't sound like the last, which makes Boldstar's 19-track debut worth the spin in your player. The members have diverse musical influences that they throw in the mixture that defines Boldstar's sound. While they all agree that Metallica is one of the ingredients, they also credit the Beatles and various indie bands. Tracks worth the "repeat" button are



BOLDSTAR'S LIVE SHOW. Echo Singson, Justin Sunico, Marie Jamora and Jazz Nicolas

the singles "Anchor," a mushy song about the martyrdom of relationships ("You want me but not that way / and that's why I stay / away"), and "Accident Prone," a ditty about karma. Tracks like "Fly on Countryside (*Pusit* 2002)" will also rock your board, as well as the candid "Condiment Symphony," where instruments are left behind and forks, spoons, and whatnot are used. Squid 9 also remixes "Countryside" on the album.

Worst Gig: A gig at the NBC Tent this year. "They made all the other bands play, and when we got up on stage and set up our stuff, they told us that they were ending the show because they only reserved the place until 12 midnight," Jazz remembers.

Best Gig: "I would say in Ateneo two years ago," Justin says. "We played 'Lucid Recipe' and everyone started to slow-dance. It was fun because it was the first time anyone's slow-danced to us before."

Whom they'd want to see win this year: "The Pin-Up Girls for Video of the Year," Sunico says. "I think people should support the indie scene."

NU Category they'd probably win: Jazz is confident they'd bag the award for "Best Eyeliner of the Year," while Justin bets on "Heftiest Band."

Monsterbot

Glenn San Agustin (vocals), Diego Mapa (vocals and guitar), Karl Claudio (bass), Carlo Navarro (portasound, toneback, synths), Ryan Magsumbol (drums, percussions)

History, please: Four years ago, classmates Karl and Carlo were in separate bands but decided to form a new one together when they hit high school. "We called ourselves Female Body Explosion," Glenn says. "But the name was too long, so we cut it short." Their main goal, according to Diego, was to play Mayric's, after having played the stage at Yosh Café and Club Dredd. And the name Monsterbot? "It's this toy," Diego says sheepishly. Their dream to play the infamous Espana bar was fulfilled when they were granted regular spots in Mayrics' weekly Sunday Grabe Sunday gigs, and later appeared on NU 107's "In The Raw" show. They also got a spot on the Sony-released "In The Raw" compilation (along with bands like Slapshock, Garlic and itchyworms!).

Sounds like: Monsterbot is NOT a rapcore band that screams its way up the music charts. Unlike most bands that mix rock and rap, the band injects different sounds like toy keyboards and the like. While Diego dubs their sound as "punk funk with beats and beeps," it's a fusion of punk, rap, funk, and whatever else is swimming in the members' heads. "It's a fusion of different music interests," Glenn points out. "I listen to a lot of rap and heavy stuff, but the other prefer otherwise." Their debut, "Destroy! Destroy!" has dished out the singles "Explosive," which earned a nod at the MTV Pilipinas 2002 Awards, and "Everything You", which is getting massive airplay on NU 107. We can't stop spinning "What Do You Mean by That?" (although Diego says it's his least favorite), and the pop-y "Parockstar" with its catchy chorus ("*Pa*-rockstar / rockstar / rockstar/ *ka kasi*"). Expect a lot of video-game fillers when you get this album.

It's about time we took a break from screaming half-naked men and acknowledged the newbies in the scene

Best gig: "Every time perfect *'yung* set," Glenn says.

Worst gig: *"Tuwing hindi* perfect *'yung* set," he laughs.

Whom they'd want to see win: Glenn would want to see his band bring home the award, but says the other nominees are equally deserving. "I'd like to see Raimund Marasigan win Producer of the Year." He also predicts "Paris" by Chicosci will win Best Song and Slapshock will take home Band of the Year.

Category Monsterbot would win: "I'd like to win Best Live Playing Band," Glenn laughs. "Or something like, Best On Stage!"

MONSTERBOT's TOYS. Diego Mapa, Ryan Magsumbol, Karl Claudio, Carlo Navarro and Glenn San Agustin

The Blue Jean Junkies

Nino Mendoza (vocals, guitar, harmonica), John Brown (drums), Edwin Coo (guitars), Lauren Oremdaim (guitar), Law Fero (bass)

The story so far: Nino candidly says that what got him and his friend Chuck Fournier to make music was booze. Their target was to write original songs. The Blue Jean Junkies have gone through numerous line-up changes over the years as members would come and go. While Chuck and him thought up of names for the band, with "Black Cat Bone" and "Sticky Fingers" as contenders, they stuck with "Blue Jean Junkies" because it is catchy and easy to recall. It has been quite a while since their first gig four years ago on Oct. 31 at Millenia Café, and they've already released a self-titled album under Loose Lips Records, distributed by Sony.

Spin the player: Nino wants to think of his band as a "Blues-rooted rock n' roll band that's open to anything and is limitless. I wouldn't want to place a boundary on our music. Every member of the band is democratic and we respectfully want to satisfy our souls... without losing our souls." Think that's deep? Nino points out that what influences their music would be what they do in their daily lives, and that's what drives them to make music. Although he's quick to confess he's got the Rolling Stones in his CD player right now. Which is what The Blue Jean Junkies' album sounds like—good guitar rock n' roll, one that you pop in the player and reminisce about those drinking sessions, one that you spin to unwind after a hectic day (that is, if you'd rather listen to Mick Jagger than Vanessa Carlton after a hard day's work). *"Rak and' Rol Kahit Saan"* screams to be played on stage with the *colegialas* of the late 70s, and "Sleep (Flying High)" is begging for those lighters to be waved in the air.

Best Gig: "Every time we come down the stage and just feel all right."

Worst Gig: "Bad gigs are accepted... I mean, you can't always be happy..."

Whom they'd want to see win: The deserving ones, as well as "The Family of the Greyhoundz," Nino says.

Category they'd want to win: If NU came up with a "Best in Harmonica" player, Nino says he would cross his fingers.

The Rock Awards will be held at the World Trade Center tonight. Acoustic performances start at 8 p.m., while the awards show starts at 9 p.m. A live telecast will be aired on NU 107.5.

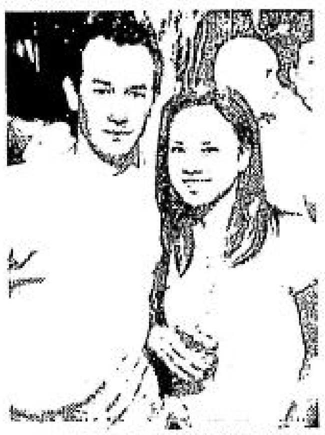
All albums are available at record stores. Boldstar's independently released album can be ordered through (0918)528-4426.

E-mail the author at volcanogirl28 @hotmail.com

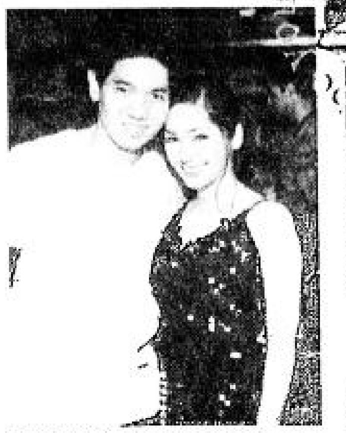
TOGA TIME. Jon Jon Rufino and Tina Pamintuan

CEBUANO SURGE. Hot item Glenn Soco and Liz Almoro

NIGHT cap with Lars and Joey



FRENCH CONNECTION. Tristan Lagarrague and Karen Borja

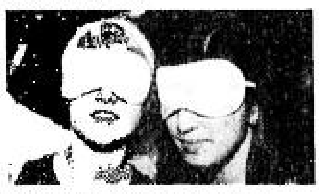


NIGHTIE NIGHT. Mike Huang and Aimee Murillo

PHOTOS BY TIM YAP

BEDTIME POSE. Sarah Meier and U sleepwear model Gwen

BEDTIME STORIES. Shaan Bermudez and Carlo Tirona



DREAM girls on the U shore

Bedtime stories and the urge to wear your pajamas

Tim Yap

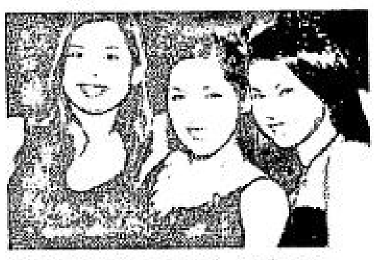
BEDTIME had never been this fun. Early on during the night, a procession of Aztec studs and bombshells ushered in a four-post bed. They later cavorted on the bed. Later, a loud "feel the urge" moan echoed from Wherelse's speakers. Smoke from the fog machine filled the club, adding to that seductive touchy-feely vibe. This went on for a while, then, boom. Climax. Blue bottles came out of the bar, served by the Wherelse wait-staff in sleepwear.

Erg (pronouced as "urge") had just been unveiled.

Following the surge of the phenomenal RTDs (ready-to-drink, for those too drunk to know), the folks from San Miguel Corp. thought of this brilliant idea—to have a drink that gets you up, up and away the whole night!

Gone will be those nights when you can't walk out of your drunken state. Guarana-infused alcotonics guarantee you'll still be up in bed (hopefully with another person) all night.

Guarana (pronounced goo-ra-na) is that ingredient that keeps drinkers awake and going. I read in this month's The Face magazine that even Cadbury's has come out with guarana-infused chocolates! Now that's double aphrodisiac. Yes, some folks call Erg "viagra in a bottle." I actually regret that because at the end of the night, that's how I actually felt, but let's not get into that.



THRICE THE FUN. Jerianne Ejercito, Aimee Murillo and Carrie Bitanga

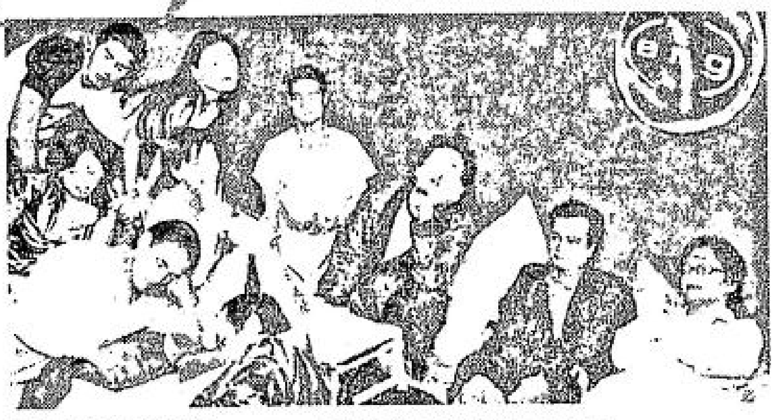
ERG TEAM Bob Dolina, Mon Reyes and Alan Montevirgen

Pajama feast

That night, Wherelse turned up the beds once again for its Pajama Jam, which has now become a most-awaited annual event. "I was shopping for sleepwear today for the party, and it was sold out," said cocktail shaker Celine Lopez, who wore her seductive skin befitting of a whole bedroom showcase. Richie Lavarro came in his tight-fit white tee and equally tight white boxers and a straw hat, straight out of some soft porn flick. DJ Montano, Philippe Ticzon and Posse showed up in sleepwear fit for "Breakfast at Tiffany's."

The early part of the night had Anna Palabyab and Mike Huang shining in their pajamas (with Shaan Bermudez acting as hostess for the bedtime story) as they romped away with Erg prizes. The late part of the program had the brat pack bringing home the prizes from Rustan's U, which launched their seductive sleepwear that sizzling night. A parade of girls with tiaras and knee-high socks had the men in the audience up in attention for the most part. Think fetish.

Oh, did I tell you it was also the DJ debut of Joel Tantoco? After much prodding at private parties, DJ JT finally said yes, after countless failed attempts by this columnist for him to take the turntables for scene shakings. He passed with flying, tight-fit pajama colors. If the reaction of the people on the dance floor were any indication, then the U division head has another career waiting for him if he decides to focus on his nocturnal side.



ON THE ERG. The scene at Wherelse's Pajama Jam

No less than the night's bedtime mistress, Victoria London, in luscious lacy lingerie (three seductive changes in one night—now how can one sleep?) introduced Wherelse's special guest DJ. Elsewhere, club king Marcel Crespo, who was busy feeling "Five-stah! Five-stah!" at the bar, popping champagne and distributing the blue bottles of Erg (not for the blue-balled, mind you) for the raunchy revelers engaging in frisky frolic in his kingdom of beds.

From there, club scene fave Mon Maramba took over, while go-go gal Ethel gyrated her way center stage, which, like a regular Wherelse Friday night, caused a ripple of electric waves among the partyphiles on the dance floor. The irony of the night came from an excited partyphile, whom I overheard saying to her mate, "If you snooze, ya lose!" And I thought Fridays was supposed to be chill-out.

SCENE SHAKER. Ethel on center stage

LONDON ABRIDGED. Victoria London sizzles in sleepwear

DREAM WEAR. Anna Palabyab in pink satin sleepwear

DREAM master Marcel Crespo feels the urge.

Help make a sick child's dream come true

WITH THE CHRISTMAS season just around the corner, Michelle Asence, the brains behind the bath and beauty line Zen Zest, thought of creating a product that provides a personal luxury while bringing joy and happiness to sick children—Wish, a lightly scented body cologne in three variants: pink, green, and blue.

So how does one cologne help change the life of suffering children? For every purchase of Wish (only P99 a bottle), P10 will be donated to the local affiliate of the Make-A-Wish Foundation to help make the dreams of terminally-ill children come true. Both partners hope to raise P1.5 million by the end of the year so these children can have a memorable Christmas.

The Make-A-Wish Foundation is an international non-profit organization that has been granting the wishes of terminally-ill children below the age of 18 for the past 22 years.

Master Choa Kok Sui

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- Learn how to release old emotional baggage and create positive changes in all your relationships
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- Experience the unique state of Total Peace and Expansion of Consciousness and Awareness within minutes of meditation
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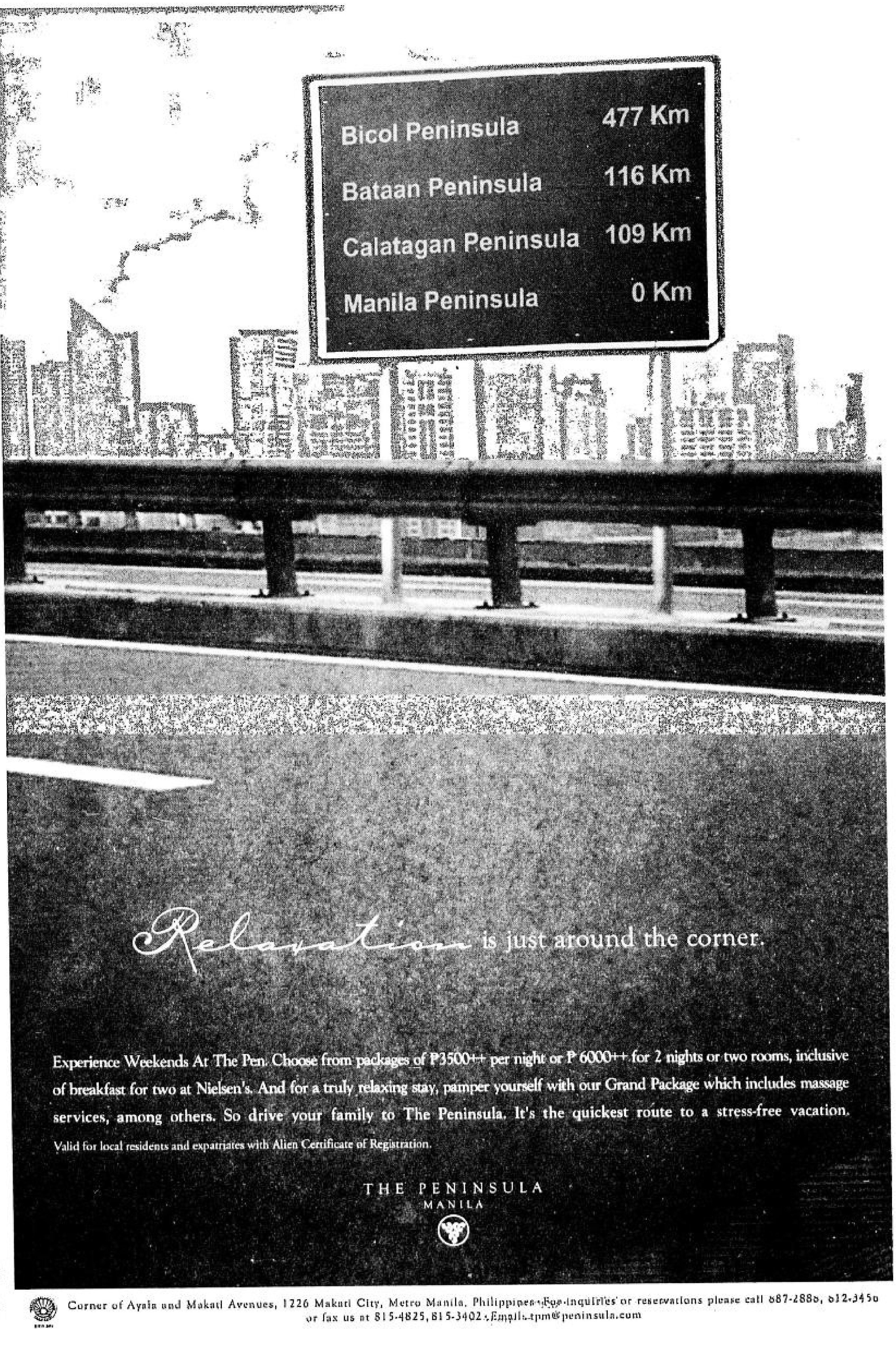

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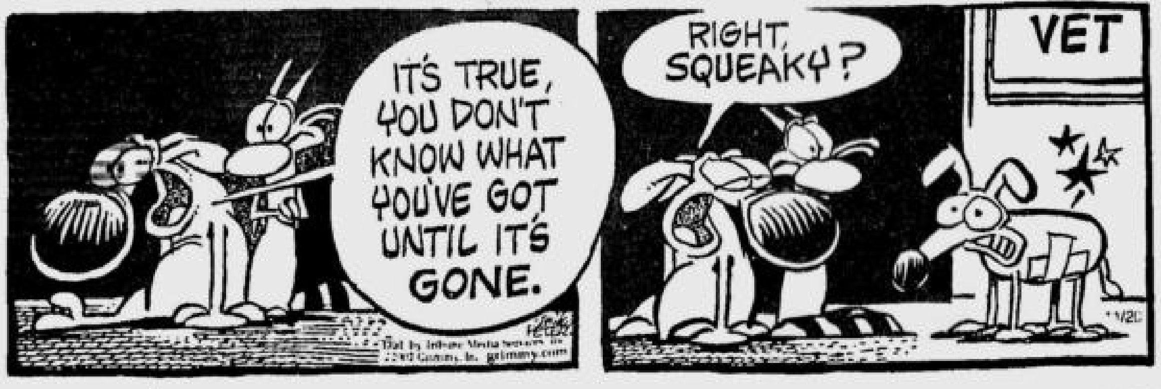
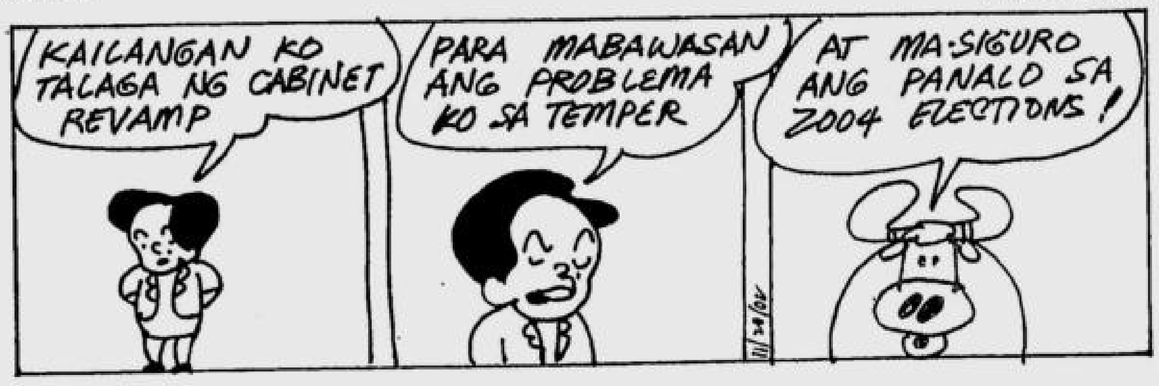
MOTHER GOOSE AND GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


IT'S TRUE, YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'VE GOT UNTIL IT'S GONE.
RIGHT, SQUEAKY?
VET

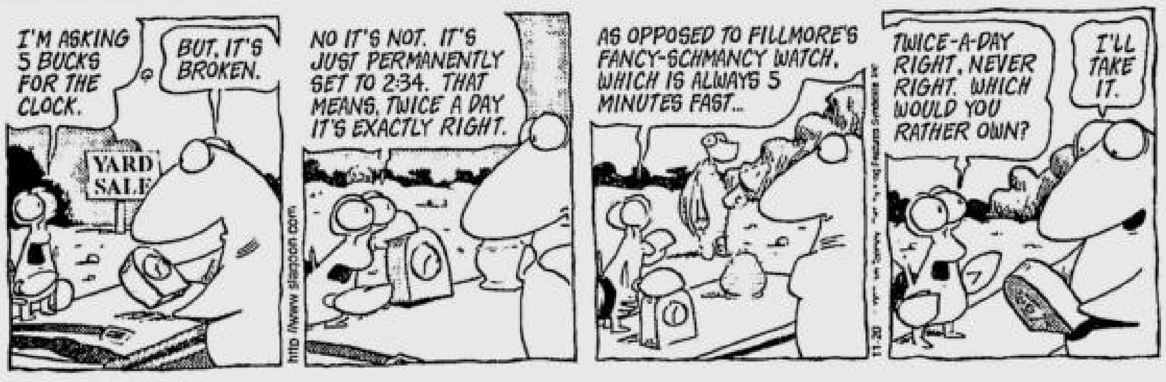
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


KAILANGAN KO TALAGA NG CABINET REVAMP
PARA MABAWASAN ANG PROBLEMA KO SA TEMPER
AT MA-SIGURO ANG PANALO SA 2004 ELECTIONS!

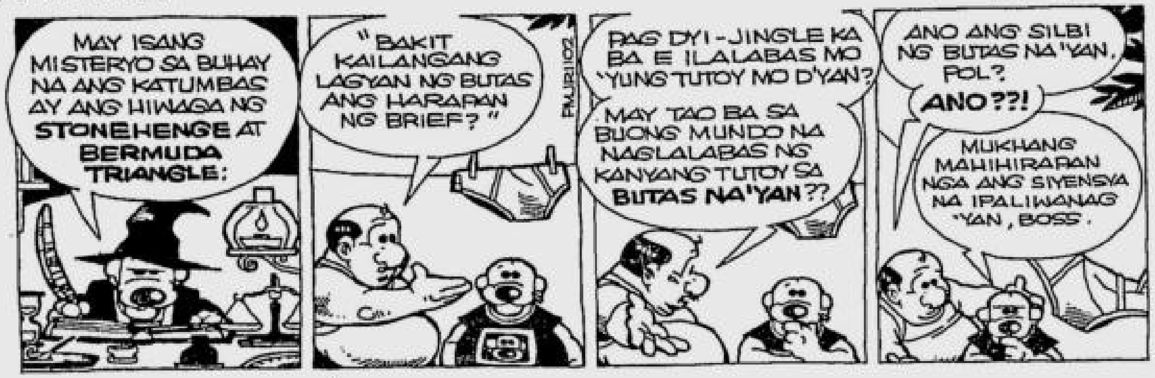
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


I'M ASKING 5 BUCKS FOR THE CLOCK.
BUT, IT'S BROKEN.
YARD SALE
NO IT'S NOT. IT'S JUST PERMANENTLY SET TO 2:34. THAT MEANS, TWICE A DAY IT'S EXACTLY RIGHT.
AS OPPOSED TO FILLMORE'S FANCY-SCHMANCY WATCH, WHICH IS ALWAYS 5 MINUTES FAST...
TWICE-A-DAY RIGHT, NEVER RIGHT. WHICH WOULD YOU RATHER OWN?
I'LL TAKE IT.
http://www.slagoon.com
11-20

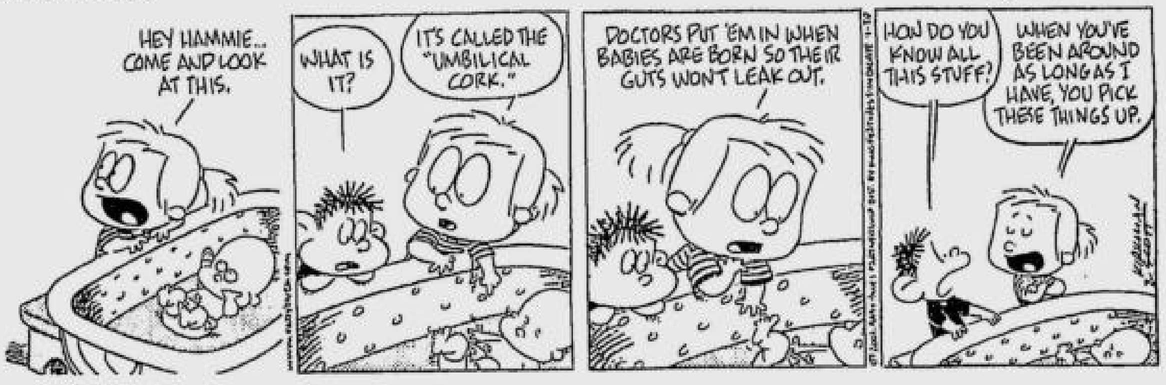
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


MAY ISANG MISTERYO SA BUHAY NA ANG KATUMBAS AY ANG HIWAGA NG STONEHENGE AT BERMUDA TRIANGLE:
"BAKIT KAILANGANG LAGYAN NG BUTAS ANG HARAPAN NG BRIEF?"
PAG DYI-JINGLE KA BA E ILALABAS MO 'YUNG TUTOY MO D'YAN?
MAY TAO BA SA BUONG MUNDO NA NAGLALABAS NG KANYANG TUTOY SA BUTAS NA'YAN??
ANO ANG SILBI NG BUTAS NA 'YAN, POL?
ANO??!
MUKHANG MAHIHIRAPAN NGA ANG SIYENSYA NA IPALIWANAG 'YAN, BOSS.

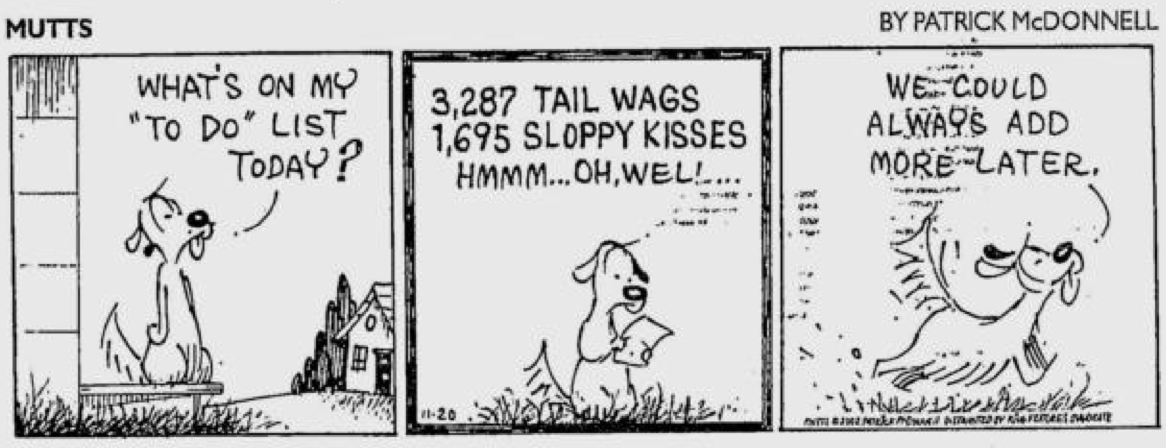
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


HEY HAMMIE... COME AND LOOK AT THIS.
WHAT IS IT?
IT'S CALLED THE "UMBILICAL CORK."
DOCTORS PUT 'EM IN WHEN BABIES ARE BORN SO THEIR GUTS WON'T LEAK OUT.
HOW DO YOU KNOW ALL THIS STUFF?
WHEN YOU'VE BEEN AROUND AS LONG AS I HAVE, YOU PICK THESE THINGS UP.

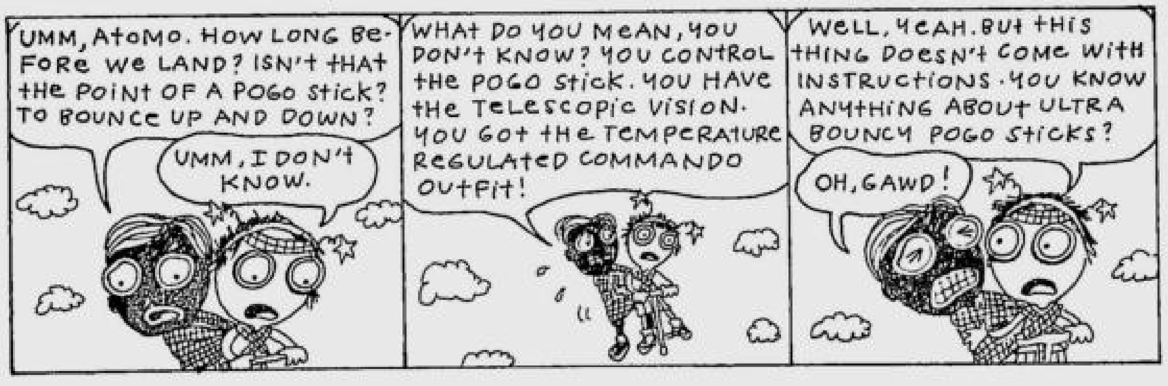
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


WHAT'S ON MY "TO DO" LIST TODAY?
3,287 TAIL WAGS
1,695 SLOPPY KISSES
HMMM...OH,WELL...
WE COULD ALWAYS ADD MORE LATER.
11-20

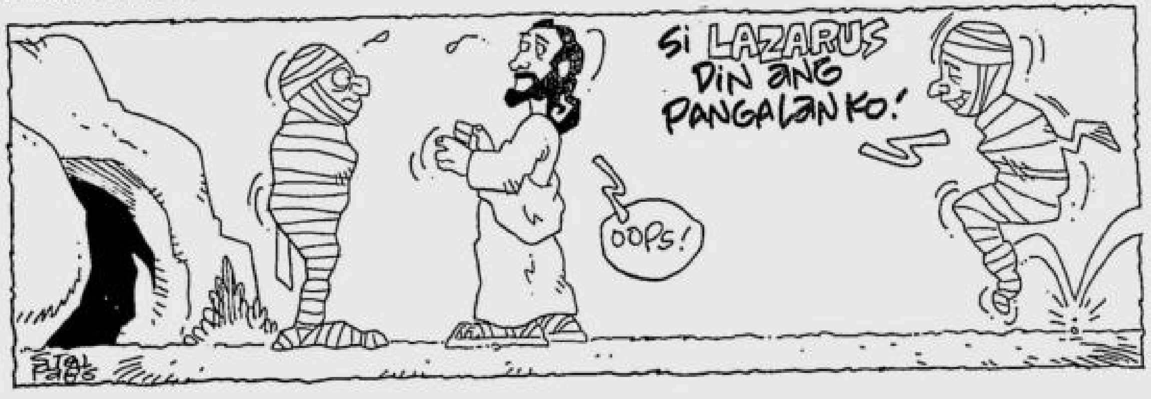
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


UMM, ATOMO. HOW LONG BEFORE WE LAND? ISN'T THAT THE POINT OF A POGO STICK? TO BOUNCE UP AND DOWN?
UMM, I DON'T KNOW.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, YOU DON'T KNOW? YOU CONTROL THE POGO STICK. YOU HAVE THE TELESCOPIC VISION. YOU GOT THE TEMPERATURE REGULATED COMMANDO OUTFIT!
WELL, YEAH. BUT THIS THING DOESN'T COME WITH INSTRUCTIONS. YOU KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT ULTRA BOUNCY POGO STICKS?
OH, GAWD!

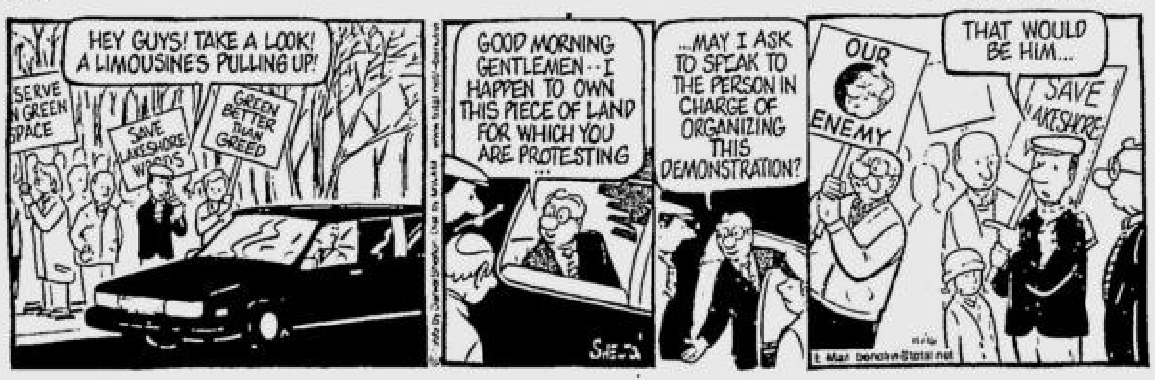
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


OOPS!
SI LAZARUS DIN ANG PANGALAN KO!

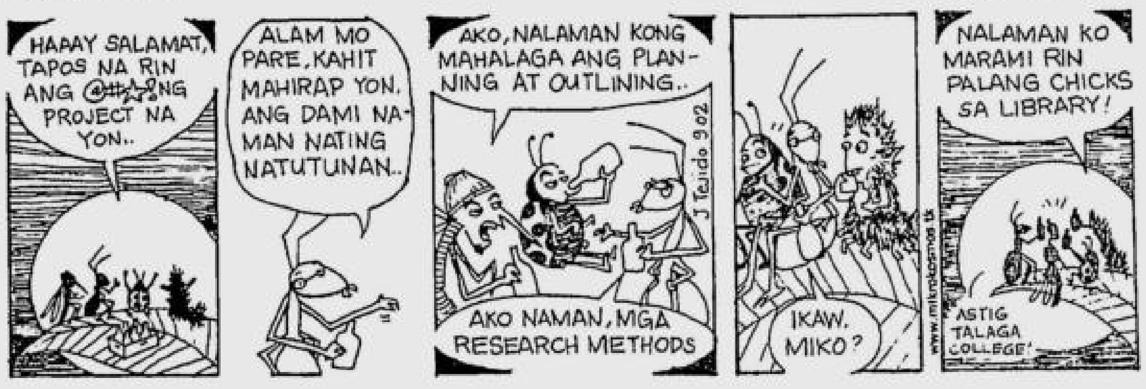
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


HEY GUYS! TAKE A LOOK! A LIMOUSINE'S PULLING UP!
SERVE GREEN SPACE
SAVE LAKESHORE WOODS
GREEN BETTER THAN GREED
GOOD MORNING GENTLEMEN.. I HAPPEN TO OWN THIS PIECE OF LAND FOR WHICH YOU ARE PROTESTING...
...MAY I ASK TO SPEAK TO THE PERSON IN CHARGE OF ORGANIZING THIS DEMONSTRATION?
OUR ENEMY
THAT WOULD BE HIM...
SAVE LAKESHORE

MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


HAAAY SALAMAT, TAPOS NA RIN ANG @#%&NG PROJECT NA YON..
ALAM MO PARE, KAHIT MAHIRAP YON, ANG DAMI NAMAN NATING NATUTUNAN..
AKO, NALAMAN KONG MAHALAGA ANG PLANNING AT OUTLINING..
AKO NAMAN, MGA RESEARCH METHODS
IKAW, MIKO?
NALAMAN KO MARAMI RIN PALANG CHICKS SA LIBRARY!
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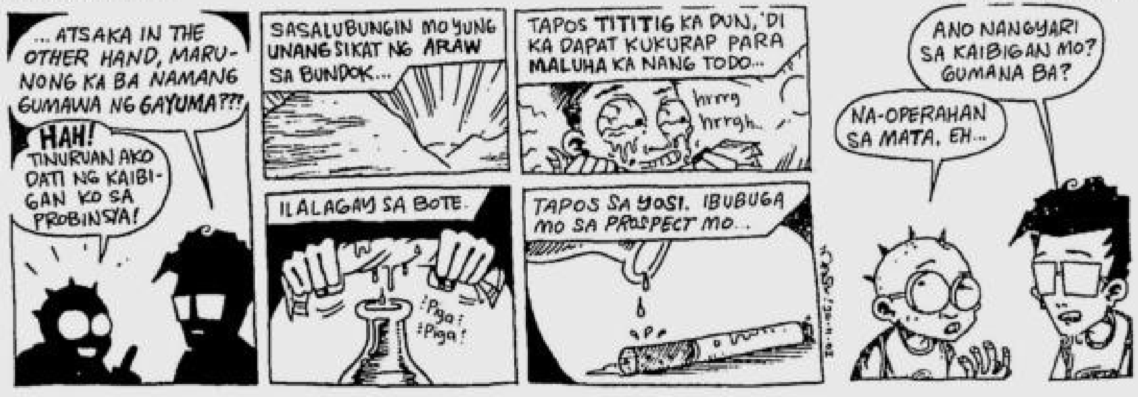
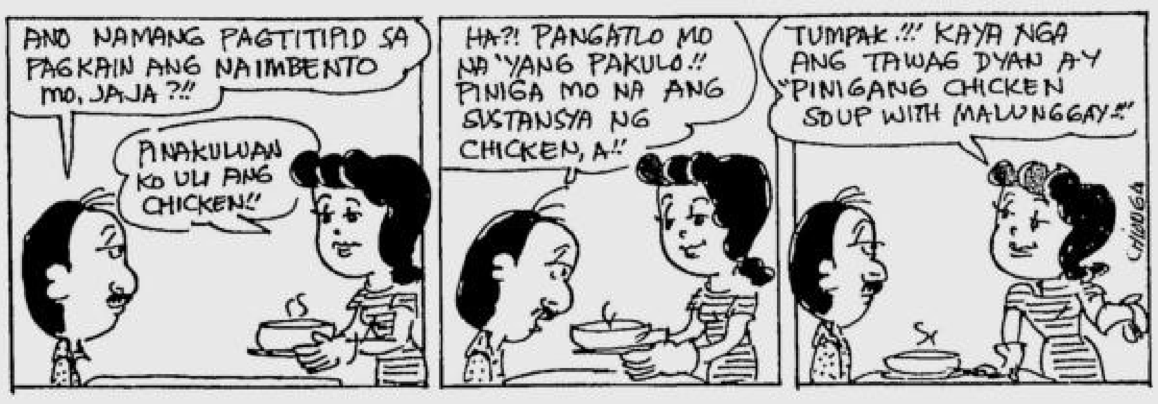
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


... ATSAKA IN THE OTHER HAND, MARUNONG KA BA NAMANG GUMAWA NG GAYUMA???
HAH! TINURUAN AKO DATI NG KAIBIGAN KO SA PROBINSYA!
SASALUBUNGIN MO YUNG UNANG SIKAT NG ARAW SA BUNDOK...
TAPOS TITITIG KA DUN, 'DI KA DAPAT KUKURAP PARA MALUHA KA NANG TODO...
hrrrg
hrrgh..
ILALAGAY SA BOTE.
Piga! Piga!
TAPOS SA YOSI. IBUBUGA MO SA PROSPECT MO...
ANO NANGYARI SA KAIBIGAN MO? GUMANA BA?
NA-OPERAHAN SA MATA, EH...

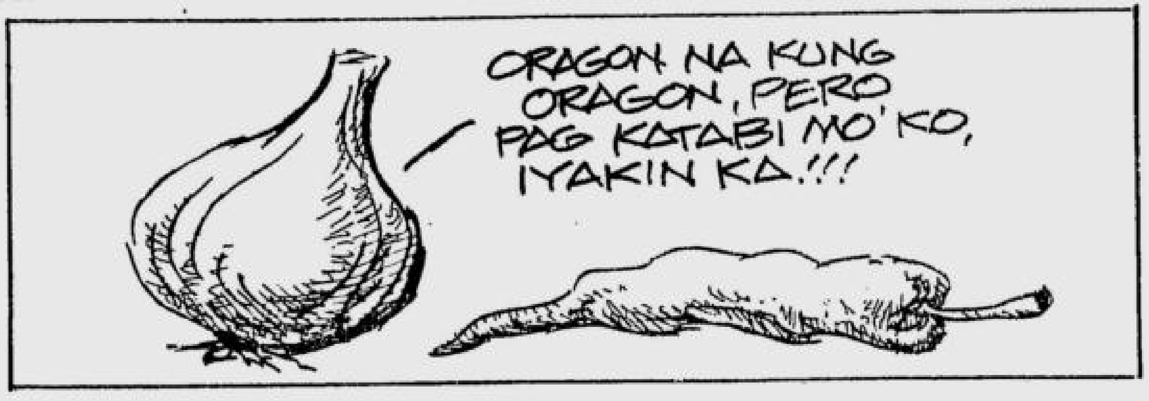
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


ANO NAMANG PAGTITIPID SA PAGKAIN ANG NAIMBENTO MO, JAJA?!!
PINAKULUAN KO ULI ANG CHICKEN!!
HA?! PANGATLO MO NA 'YANG PAKULO!! PINIGA MO NA ANG SUSTANSYA NG CHICKEN, A!!
TUMPAK!!! KAYA NGA ANG TAWAG DYAN AY "PINIGANG CHICKEN SOUP WITH MALUNGGAY!!"
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


ORAGON NA KUNG ORAGON, PERO PAG KATABI MO 'KO, IYAKIN KA.!!!

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Sean Young, Dick Smothers, Alistair Cooke, Robert Kennedy

Happy Birthday: You will push yourself until you reach whatever goal you have set for yourself this year. You will take a strong stance to ensure that your ideas and beliefs aren't being overlooked. It will be a great year to expand your knowledge and your talents. Greater self-development will lead to wonderful new beginnings. Your numbers are 8, 17, 22, 28, 31, 35

ARIES (March 21-April 19): You should concentrate on investments and career goals. Your partner may not agree with your decisions. Act on your past experience.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Your tendency to be stubborn with a business or emotional partner could lead to major upset. Recognize this trait in yourself and act accordingly. Put your efforts into working quietly on your own.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Avoid confrontations with your boss or peers. Your greatest accomplishments will come from working hard and staying out of office politics. Do not allow anyone to involve you in their complaints and criticisms.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Involve yourself in group or activities but keep in mind that extravagance must be curtailed. There are many ways to entertain yourself without spending a lot.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Activities in your home may lead to heated discussions. Plan a quiet outing for you and your lover. Don't allow friends or relatives to interfere with your personal life.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): You can learn a lot if you listen to the words of someone who is older and more established. You'll be inspired to move in a new direction. Make plans to change what you don't like about yourself.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Deception and disillusionment will only lead to problems in your home environment. Try to be as honest as possible with yourself and others. Your ability to attract potential partners must be kept in perspective.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Don't let your jealous tendency surface. Spend time communicating honestly with your partner. You can clear up a lot of misunderstandings that have been simmering beneath the surface.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Don't give your employer a reason to question your talents. Keep your emotions in check both at work and at home. Try to remain flexible and open to possibilities.

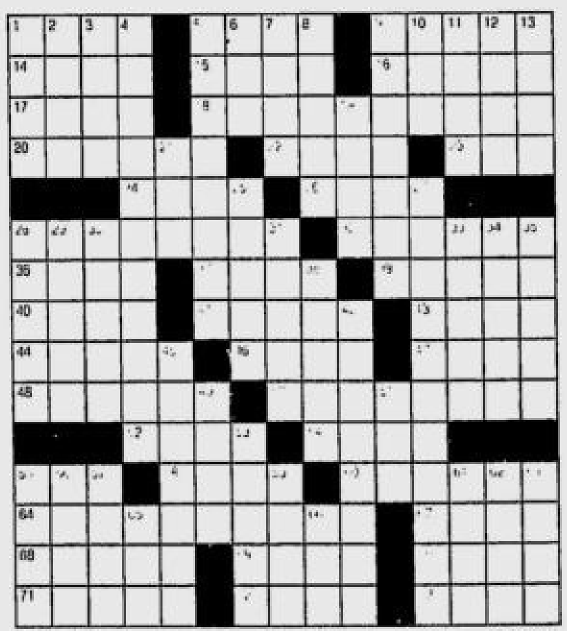
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Setbacks regarding work will arise if you have been extravagant or too trusting of those you are doing business with. Take a close look at legal documents before you sign.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Someone you live with may be erratic or upset about changes in your domestic scene. Try to be understanding and compassionate about his or her needs. You may have to consider making a compromise.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): This is a great day to engage in household projects or look into real estate opportunities. Be careful not to interfere in the personal problems of friends or relatives.

Birthday Baby: You will be full of ideas and forever asking questions. You will be well liked and quick to respond. You will want to experience all that life has to offer.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Jack Hammond
Savannah, GA

11/20/02

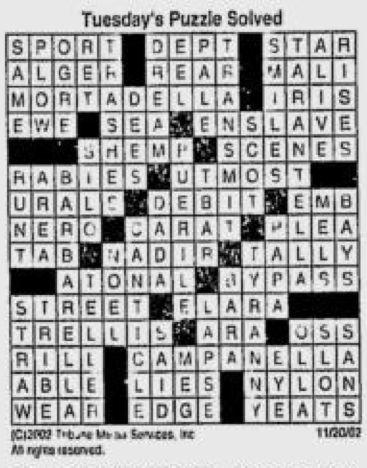
ACROSS

1 Slithering squeezers
5 Con
9 Guitar rhythm
14 Old Cassino cash
15 One from Warsaw
16 Contain
17 China land
18 Texas poetry?
20 Scram!
22 Placid
23 Ames and Koch
24 Josip Broz
26 Last year's frosh
28 Most virile
32 Peanut
36 Sailor's direction
37 Cambodian currency
39 Quite chubby
40 "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes" writer
41 Calyx segment
43 Bone: pref.
44 Put into proper pitch
46 Ready to pick
47 On an even __
48 Beset
50 Metabolic disorder
52 Follow
54 Thin coating
55 Physicians' soc.
58 Disfigure
60 Stick
64 Maine explosion?
67 Completed
68 Sing like Bing
69 Yokel
70 Smokey or Yogi
71 Church council
72 Woe is me
73 Part of R.E.O.

DOWN

1 Spill the beans
2 Seine feeder
3 Opera highlight
4 Washington perch?
5 Lookouts
6 Capé on the Atlantic
7 One Baldwin
8 Flattop hills
9 Rug cleaner
10 In addition
11 Discourteous
12 Found a function for
13 Recruit's meal
19 Trudge
21 Roman 3
25 Basketry willow
27 New Jersey vagrant?
28 Mediterranean republic
29 Jesus and Moises
30 Dodge models
31 Lukewarm
33 Assail
34 First name in cosmetics
35 Staggers
38 __ lazuli
42 Amounts through breaches
45 Engagement stone
49 Dissembler
51 Offer
53 Heavenly scales
55 Kindergarten topic
56 Contrary one
57 Pretty soon
59 Heavy hammer
61 Daredevil Knievel
62 Recite
63 Gets off the track
65 Sticky stuff
66 Pacers' org.

Tuesday's Puzzle Solved



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11/20/02

Stumped? Call 900-656-8900 99 cents a minute

All grown up. . . almost

ON SHAINA. Herbench smocked eyelet cotton top and Herbench overhauled dark khaki clamdigger

DO you know what happens to little girls with twinkling eyes and disarming smiles? They grow up to be Herbench image models, that's what.

Shaina Magdayao, kid sister to actress-singer Vina Morales, brings her signature vivacious and precocious personality to the label Herbench, the equally thriving female counterpart of top lifestyle brand Bench.

Wearing Herbench's latest in young girl fashion, Shaina is a picture of free-spiritedness and cheerful youth. She is proof that good fashion sense does not always come with age as she shows simple yet right-on-the-mark fashionista sensibilities—whether all dolled-up in a lace-trimmed smocked cotton top or a Sabrina-inspired blouse paired with Herbench overhauled reversible denim skirt, or just garbed in a plain cotton shirt.

Shaina joins a growing list of Herbench devotees that include image models Lucy Torres-Gomez, Amanda Griffin and Aubrey Miles.

HERBENCH cotton sabrina cap sleeves and Herbench overhauled reversible denim skirt and belt

HERBENCH lace trimmed sleeveless smocked cotton top

HERBENCH cotton polyester raglan sleeveless and Herbench overhauled white denim pants

More beauty . . .

From page E6

Hairy Scary

What petrifies men more than losing their *mojo*? A girl with a mustache, that's what. Don't grab that razor and shave that *bigote* in panic! Use a depilatory or bleach instead. **Sally Hansen** has a range of depilatories for the face, but I personally like the brush-on variety for maximum convenience. Before you get all excited at the prospect of a fuzz-free upper lip, please do a patch test first to check for any allergic reactions that may take place and force you into many dateless nights. If you wish for subtler "hair removal," top salons recommend **Jolie** bleach to turn those whiskers into a barely-noticeable shade of blonde. Tan and tawny girls beware, as bleach does the best disappearing job on girls with fair skin. You wouldn't want your hair to be lighter than the rest of your face, would you? Now if handling any of these chemicals makes you nervous, visit a reputable salon and let them do the dirty work for you.

Attention, all *balbon* girls out there! If you're feeling hairier than Cousin It and are wishing for silky, hairless perfection, read on. It's time you graduated from your dad's rusty old Gillette and open up to the many possibilities of getting rid of body fuzz. I am not a big fan of shaving for many reasons: 1) I am one clumsy woman (can you say nicks and wounds? Ouch!); 2) I hate stubble (nobody appreciates legs that resemble a species from the cacti family); 3) I seem to be allergic to the "moisturizing strip" of some razor brands (as in unsightly bumps for days after) so I wax, instead.

Yep, my legs, arms, pits and (yowtch!) bikini area have all been subject to waxing torture. The agony, you might say, of pulling that strip off, makes you anxious to even try it, but believe me, you'll get used to it. After all, being predisposed to a world of menstrual cramps and childbirth, I'm sure it's nothing you can't handle. Ever the authority on hair removal, try **Sally Hansen**'s line of hot and cold waxes, or check out **The Body Shop's Sugaring Kit** for a more natural formula.

If you're the type who suffers from chronic *tamad*—itis and opts for instant gratification every time, use a lotion depilatory to get rid of leg hair. (I'd still suggest waxing or bleaching for arms, as these lotions don't remove hair from the root and may cause stubbly regrowth that won't be pretty.) Slather it on, wait 10 minutes, wipe it off, and voila! Fuzz-free stems for at least three days! You guessed it, **Sally Hansen** has the depilatory department all covered.

Professional hair removal services have been sprouting left and right at salons and clinics everywhere. **Threading** works for the brow area, underarms, even legs! High-tech *kikays* are going for **laser hair removal** and bidding their body hair *buh-bye* for good. Costly, but they say it's worth it. Visit your favorite salon and ask your dermatologist about these procedures.

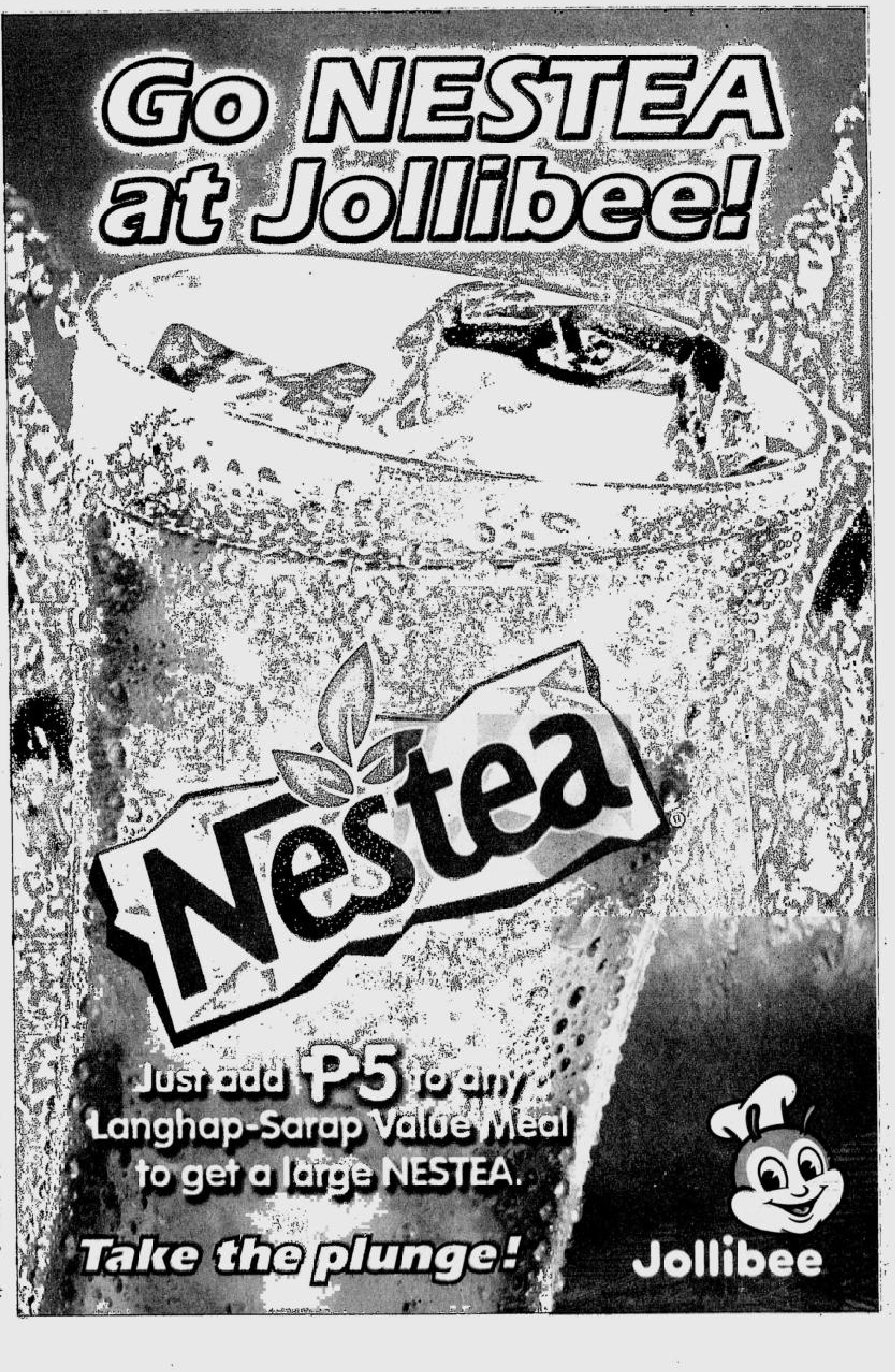
Dark elbows and knees

These can ruin an otherwise alabaster complexion. Have you been looking like you've dipped your elbows in and kneeled on ink? My *lola* used to be best friends with her pumice *stone*, the genuine kind, and would happily scrub away the demons that brought ugly joints. She eventually left the rock in the Stone Age (pun intended) and has since upgraded to a bath lily and an exfoliating body wash. Again, the answer to a million and one beauty dilemmas: exfoliate! Religiously scrub these areas with a lily or loofah to rid them of surface cells. After every shower, slap on a generous amount of **Jergens Skin Smoothing Body Lotion** with fruit acids to moisturize and soften dark areas. At night, use **Bench Soft Point**, a whitening lotion that comes in a foam-tipped applicator made especially for elbows and knees. Tip: Avoid propping up elbows on unfamiliar surfaces. The dirt and germs that accumulate could worsen darkening.

What's new in Lora's *kikay* kit? I'm finding myself with no need of a powder with **Neutrogena Pore Refining Mattifier**—gives me a velvety look in an instant. For nights out, I use it under **Paula Dorf's Weightless Cream Foundation**, since it delivers coverage without sacrificing luminescence. Finally, being the lipgloss junkie that I am, I'm starting a new collection of the ever-affordable **Herbench Lip Gloss** that now comes in a convenient twist-pen. The **Ballerina** shade makes me want to go back to the days of ruffled tutus, toe shoes and pirouettes.

Products mentioned available at PCX, Watson's and other Health and Beauty stores; Bench (at Bench boutiques nationwide); The Body Shop (at major malls) and Paula Dorf (at Essenses, Rustans).

E-mail the author at pdi_vanityfare@hotmail.com



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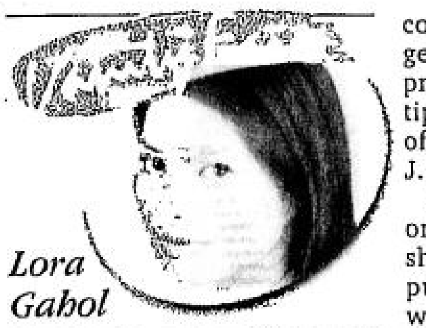
More beauty tragedies you can avoid



Lora Gabol

DUE to countless e-mail requests and text messages from friends and strangers alike, I have decided to do a sequel to last week's column on the *kikay* tragedies we all have to deal with because nobody wants to spend the rest of her life avoiding mirrors at all costs.

Banishing Back-ne

This particular condition tops my list this week. While on a night out last Saturday, I received three text messages—one from Inquirer feedback, two from casual acquaintances who'd never text me under normal circumstances—whining about their biggest beauty annoyance: zits on their back. I was wearing a backless top. Coincidence? I hope so.

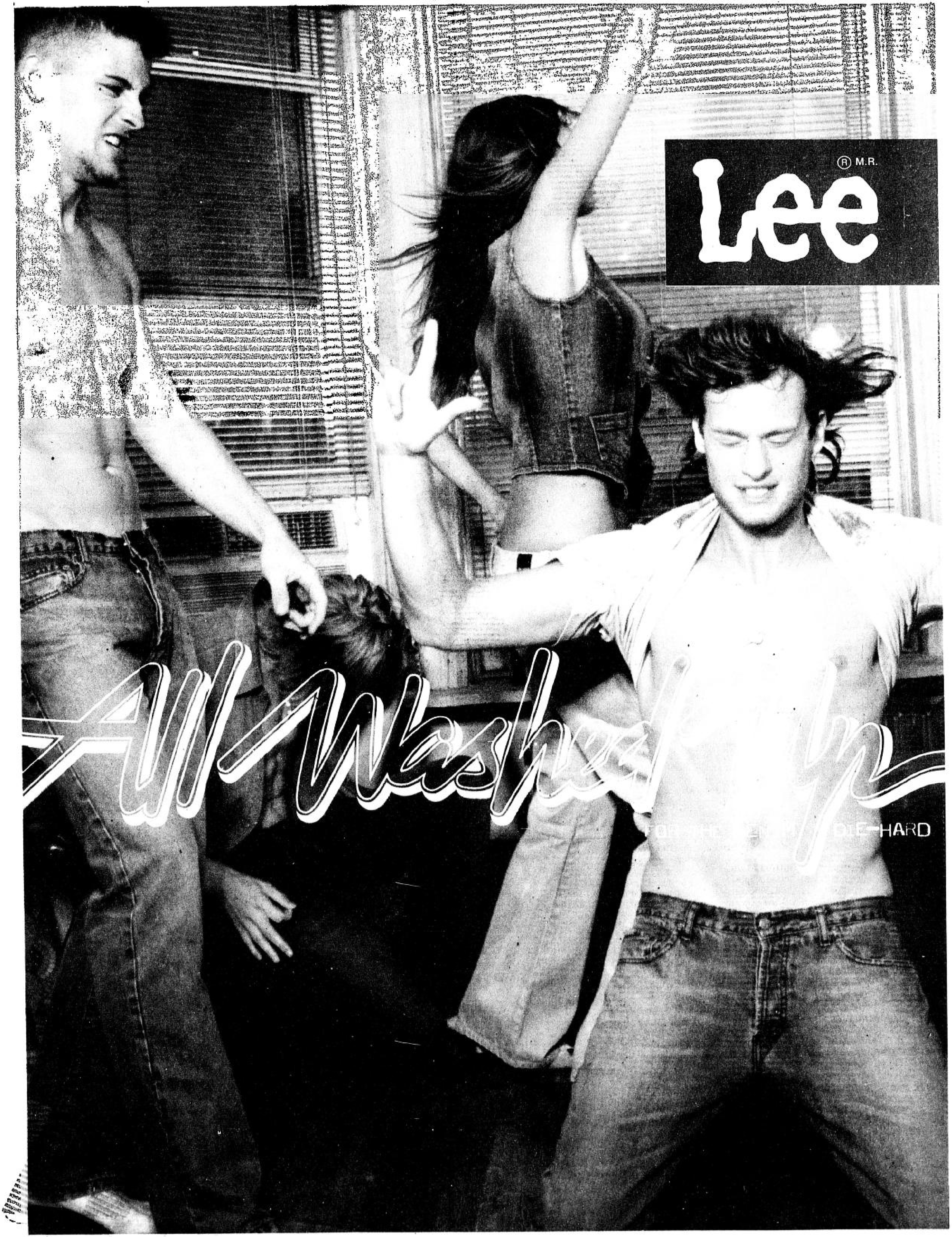
Those nasty flare-ups are brought about by a lot of things—a faulty set of genes, stress, hygiene, diet... I think you get the picture. But don't swear off back-baring clothes just yet. While I can attribute the absence of bumps on my back to the genetic code my parents passed on to me, I do take steps to maintain the virgin complexion of my back. There remains a smidgen of hope, and it comes in a tube. Use a scrub in the shower to remove pore-clogging skin cells, encourage healthy sebum production and improve skin circulation. Choose a mild product so as not to aggravate the pimple colonies already in residence on your back. **St. Ives** has reincarnated the famous **Apricot Scrub** into a formulation specifically for the body. What's more, back-ne could be result of mere negligence (tsk, tsk). Here are more practical, virtually product-less tips to give you renewed hopes of donning a low-back gown a la J. Lo.

Tip No. 1: Bring a shower cap or a crab clip in the bath. After shampooing and conditioning, put your hair up and lather up with your body wash or scrub. Those breakouts could be an allergic reaction to the products you use on your hair, and this final scrubbing could get rid of residue that translates to more zits.

Tip No. 2: If you work out, or are simply a sweat hog, try to change tops in the middle of the day—or at least make cotton shirts your new wardrobe must-haves.

Tip No. 3: Three words: **Johnson's Baby Powder**. It's my own personal favorite. It keeps the skin on my back dry, and makes me feel like a two-year-old again. A word of caution, though: check for tell-tale marks on that black shirt after dusting it on. Another word of caution: Some people may be allergic to powder.

Tip No. 4: If you really must, use a medicated cleanser and a mild acne treatment. **Acne Aid Bar** does double-duty on your face and back.

MORE/ p.E5